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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

Do you think the ambience of a tropical island that tourists expect is adversely affected by the presence of the pre-positioning ships on our horizon?

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Santorum says Republicans should give President Obama another term if Santorum isn't the GOP nominee.

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Erika Van Pelt didn't cut it on "American Idol."

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Fitial names Rosario to Election Commission board. PAGE 5

Mafnas says he welcomes any probe

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Department of Public Safety Commissioner Ramon C. Mafnas said yesterday that he welcomes any independent investigation by federal and CNMI authorities on complaints that he allegedly threatened to arrest, handcuff, and shoot two security guards and a dive instructor in separate incidents in Marpi last year and this year.

» Commissioner also discloses that DPS 'has more than 3 or 4 sore senior officers'



Mafnas

In a statement, Mafnas said the allegations are the product of individuals "with ulterior motives to fulfill their selfish agenda."
"This is an attempt to smear the name and reputation of the commissioner, and the commissioner will not engage in dignifying their claims on baseless allegations. There are always two or more sides to every story," Maf-

nas said.

Saipan Tribune sources said that two Filipino security guards and a Korean dive instructor filed the complaints before DPS and the Federal Bureau of Investigation in February 2012.

Saipan Tribune tried to obtain comments from Mafnas on Thursday. In his reply sent through email that night, Mafnas said he will not comment "on nonsense like this."

"I welcome anyone to conduct an investigation," he added.

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By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

COVENANT DAY

36 years of being part of the US

Today marks the 36th year of the signing of a document that made the Northern Marianas a part of the United States, a historic date that Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos and other community members said the CNMI should celebrate and reflect on.

Covenant Day, as the day is known, is an observed CNMI holiday.

"Covenant Day is not just a holiday. It's day in which we should all sit back and maybe take a look at the document

and reminisce on where we have been, where we are, and where we're headed," Inos told reporters in an interview at the launching of the "Our Laolao Litter-Free On Land and Sea" campaign on Thursday.

On March 24, 1976, President Gerald Ford signed a joint congressional resolution approving a mutually negotiated "Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States." The Covenant defines the unique relationship between the

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Q&A: What makes gasoline prices rise?

By JONATHAN FAHEY
AP ENERGY WRITER

RELATED NEWS

► Unhappy public not sure who to blame for high gas. PAGE 13

NEW YORK (AP)—Watching the numbers on the gas pump tick ever higher can boil the blood and lead the mind to wonder: Why are gasoline prices so high?

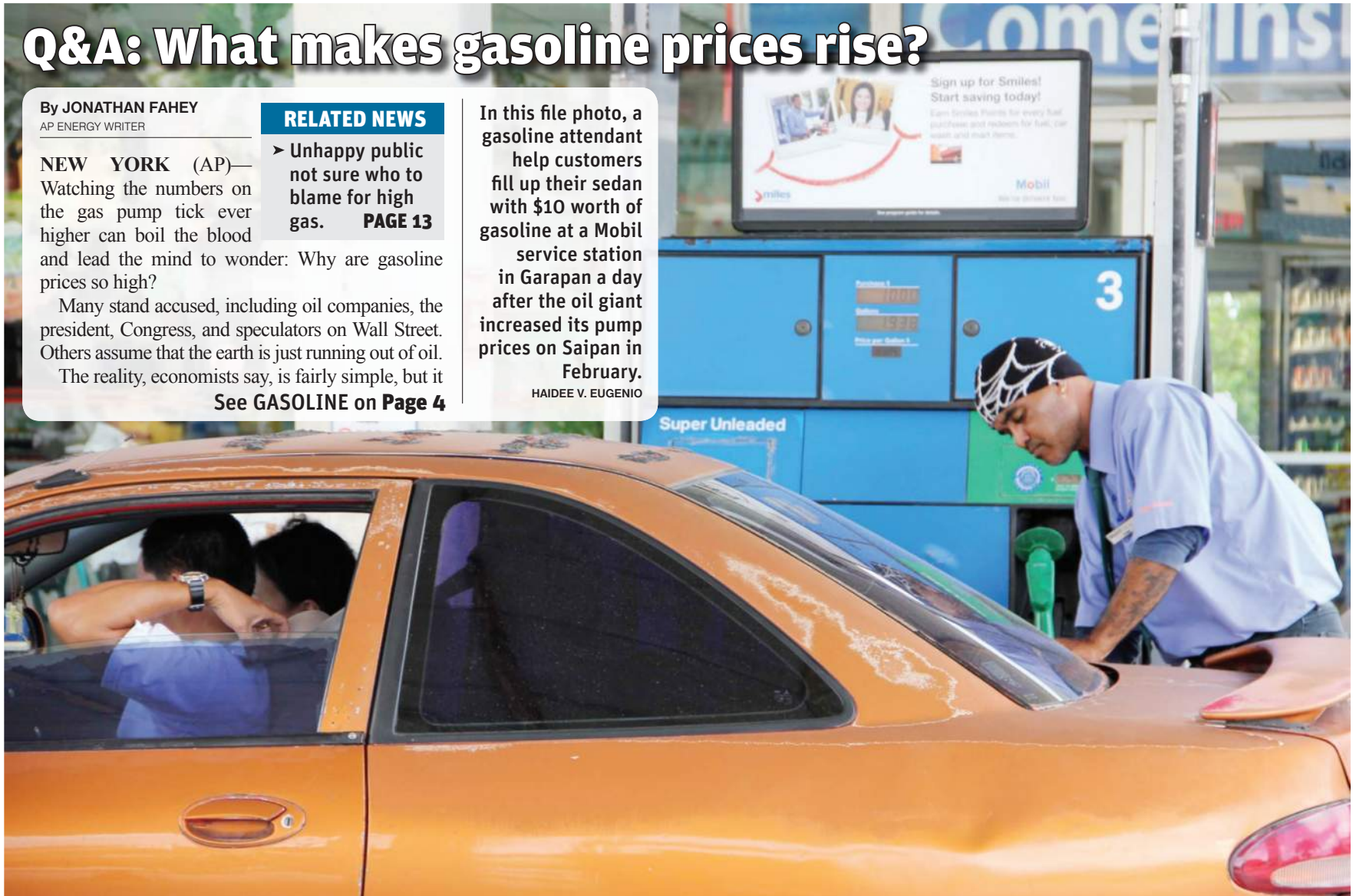
Many stand accused, including oil companies, the president, Congress, and speculators on Wall Street. Others assume that the earth is just running out of oil.

The reality, economists say, is fairly simple, but it

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In this file photo, a gasoline attendant help customers fill up their sedan with \$10 worth of gasoline at a Mobil service station in Garapan a day after the oil giant increased its pump prices on Saipan in February.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



Local

Judge dismisses Davis' lawsuit vs Election Commission

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona has dismissed the lawsuit filed by John H. Davis Jr., a U.S. citizen who wants to stop the Commonwealth Election Commission from denying U.S. citizens who are not of Northern Marianas descent the right to vote on any issue regarding Article 12 of the CNMI Constitution or on any other issues.

In an order issued Thursday, Manglona, however, allowed Davis 14 days to file a second amended complaint redressing deficiencies in his lawsuit.

Manglona cited that it is expressly the province of Congress to "enforce...by appropriate legislation" the provisions of the 14th and 15th Amendments.

The judge said that any action for relief from violation of rights guaranteed by those amendments must, therefore, be grounded on federal statutes.

For example, Manglona said, 42 U.S.C. Section 1983, originally Section 1 of the Civil Rights Act of 1871, was enacted "for the purpose of 'enforcing the Provisions of the Fourteenth Amendment.'"

Manglona ruled that the statutes on which Davis relies do not provide such a cause of action.

"Davis must look elsewhere than these statutes to establish subject matter jurisdiction," the judge said.

The Commonwealth Election Commission, its officials, and Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, through the Office of the Attorney General, moved to dismiss the lawsuit "for failure to state a claim upon which relief can be granted."

The OAG argued that because Davis has not pleaded a right of action under 42 U.S.C. Section 1983 to redress the alleged violation of his civil rights under the U.S. Constitution, he has not stated a cognizable legal theory for relief.

The OAG also asked the court to dismiss the claim against the Election Commission on grounds that it is not a "person" subject to suit under Section 1983.

In Thursday's hearing, Davis, through counsel Jeanne Rayphand, asserted that "this is not a Section 1983 case, but an action for declaratory judgment and injunctive relief seeking to prevent the unconstitutional deprivation of plaintiff's right to vote."

At the hearing, Manglona invited Davis to reconsider his position, but he, through Rayphand, declined.

Davis, a vice principal at Marianas High School, wants the court to declare that Article 18 Section 5(c) of the CNMI Constitution violates the 14th and 15th Amendments of the U.S. Constitution and is invalid, null, and void.

Article 12 limits landownership in the CNMI only to those of NMI descent. It is up for voters' review starting this year.

Article 18 Section 5(c) states that "in the case of a proposed amendment to Article 12, the word 'voters' shall be limited to eligible voters under Article 7 who are also persons of Northern Marianas descent as described in Article 12 Section 4, and the term 'votes cast' as used in subsection 5(b) shall mean the votes cast by such voters." (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

Chamber announces '12 scholarship awards

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce said yesterday that its 2012 SCC Scholarship Awards applications are now available for all future 2012 graduating high school students who meet criteria for those annual Chamber awards.

Five high school students will receive a one-time \$2,000 scholarship award to an accredited public or private institution of higher learning. The scholarships are awarded for tuition, books, education fees, and living expenses.

Applicants are reviewed and judged by a panel of Chamber members who evaluate and scale a variety of criteria, including academic achievement, leadership in school activities, commitment to community, character and grade point average.

Criteria used to award the scholarship recipients:

- You must be enrolled as a senior in a secondary school on Saipan.

- You must show proof of acceptance to a college, university, or vocational school of your choice.

- You must have a grade point average of 3.5 or higher at the time of application.

- You must have completed either the SAT or ACT College entrance exams and submit your scores.

- You must submit letters of recommendation from two persons, and one should be from a business employer or an educator.

- You must complete a personal interview with the Chamber's Education Committee.

- You must submit an essay of no more than 1,000 words on the topic: "How I will use my education to improve the CNMI."

The deadline for submitting applications and material to the Chamber office is Friday, April 27, 2012, at 5pm. Scholarships will be awarded on Wednesday, June 6, 2012, at the Chamber general membership meeting. Applications are available with high school counselors, or at the Chamber office. Call 233-7150, or email coordinator@saipan-chamber.com for more information. (*SCC*)



JOETEN DONATION

J.C. Tenorio Enterprises donates a \$1,000 check to Frank Sablan and the Kagman High School Culinary Arts Program.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

PSS program manager to run for Senate seat

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Illuminanda Reyes Bermudes declared her intention to run as a senator representing Saipan at an intimate gathering near the Legislature on Capital Hill yesterday afternoon.

"Solutions not illusions," Bermudes, fondly known as "Lumi," said as she addressed a crowd mostly wearing red shirts.

Bermudes is running as an independent candidate. She is the current program manager of the Public School System's Chamorro Language and Heritage Studies, a post she has held for two years. She has been with PSS for more than 10 years.

"This is my first time to run

for public office, but I have always been a public servant," she told *Saipan Tribune*. "I love doing things, I love helping people."

Education and economy, she said, will be among the priorities of her campaign. She said she doesn't have all the answers to questions about how to make the CNMI a better place, but she will work with and listen to everyone who wants to be part of the solution.

"But don't just tell me there's a problem; I hope you would also share what you think could be done [to solve the problem]," she added.

Bermudes is so far the third individual known to be running for a Saipan Senate seat in the

Nov. 6 midterm elections.

The other two are incumbent Sen. Luis Crisostimo (Ind-Saipan), and Rep. Ray Yumul (R-Saipan). Crisostimo said he will seek re-election under Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's Republican Party, while Yumul said he will run as an independent.

Kimo Rosario, chairman of Bermudes' campaign committee, and John Oliver Gonzales, vice chair of the committee, introduced Bermudes to the crowd of adults and children.

"Today we begin our journey," Gonzales said.

He said Bermudes came from humble beginnings. Bermudes is one of four children of a carpenter and an administrative assistant, and went on

to become the one taking care of family matters.

Bermudes said she wants her campaign to be different. She said she doesn't want to fundraise or solicit donations, because many in the community are now having financial difficulty.

"There are too many issues to face but we should never forget to smile, and have fun. We must have hope," she said.

Beginning on April 13 and every Friday thereafter, Bermudes will have a sit-down and conversations with community members about a host of issues, at the Minatchom Atdao. Her campaign team is expected to complete their official campaign platform in the next few days.



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Against dark skies and the threat of rain, Illuminanda "Lumi" R. Bermudes, in front row, joins her supporters for a group photo after declaring yesterday afternoon her intention to run as a senator representing Saipan in the Nov. 6 midterm elections. Also in the photo are her campaign team chairman Kimo Rosario and vice chairman John Oliver Gonzales.

Limited water supply, possible outage this weekend

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. alerted yesterday its customers in the areas surrounding Fina Sisu that they will experience an 11-hour water outage beginning Friday 8pm to Saturday 6am.

Other areas expected to be affected by the service interruptions include Chalan Lau Lau, Middle Road, and Chalan Pale Arnold to the Old Japanese Jail.

Reduced service hours is also expected in the area of Beach Road from Microl Toyota to Naked Fish.

In a statement, CUC said its

water operations crew discovered last week that its Kannat Tabla tank was nearly empty due to a motor failure at a booster station. Since then immediate steps have been taken to correct system problems; however, time is needed to correct the problem and refill the tank. Water interruptions and outages

in the same areas and villages were also announced last week.

CUC deputy executive director Alan Fletcher explained yesterday the latest cause of this weekend's interruptions. "While the same area as a few weeks ago, this problem was caused by a combination of moving water between zones to back-fill a shortage in another area due to a leak. In addition, there was a separate mechanical failure that contrib-

uted to the tank not refilling," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Fletcher pointed out that CUC remains committed to achieving 24-hour supply on Saipan this year. "Unfortunately, as we 'push' water supply and hours out, any weak points in piping or pumping can become stressed, resulting in repairs. CUC will continue to work on these issues throughout the weekend to restore service as quickly as

possible," he added.

Part of CUC's efforts in achieving the 24-hour water supply in 2012 is to move water between system zones to various tanks. The goal is to operate the water system by having customers served by the water stored in CUC tanks and not direct-fed from wells.

Call CUC's 24-hour trouble desk at 235-0282/2282 for emergency requests.



SAEF SCHOOL SCIENCE FAIR

Saipan American Education Foundation School held its first annual Science fair on Feb. 29, 2012, in the school's lounge area. The coordinators were Science teachers Rosalie H. Habijan and Jener Pineda. The 2nd-8th grade students' enthusiasm for science showed in their overwhelming participation. Normita Cabalbag, Joselito M. Lazaro, and Roberto G. Marilla Jr. served as judges. Some proud parents were there to witness the unfolding of the creative and scientific minds of the students.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Ling Na Xiao Hodson Qian, a fifth grader impressed the judges with her presentation, showing her knowledge on photosynthesis. Although there were a lot of participants in the Science Fair, she got the highest score because she was able to answer the judges' questions clearly. All the participants in the science fair were given certificates of recognition.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Manta Band halfway to fundraising target

» Golf tourney set for March 31; special raffle drawing on May 4

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Just months before its scheduled performance at the 2012 London Olympics, the Saipan Southern High School Manta Ray Band is only halfway to the \$300,000 it needs to finance its trip to the English capital.

Saipan Southern High principal Jesse Tudela is still optimistic, however, about the group's chance of finding the balance of the amount. To date, the group already has about \$150,000 on hand, Tudela said, inclusive of the parents' share in their children's airfare, educational tax credit donations, and proceeds of the school's early fundraising activities.

This month, the school will host a big fundraiser: the Man-

ta Band Golf Tournament on March 31 at the Coral Ocean Point. Individual player's fee is \$75. It will start at 7am for the registration.

Tudela said the band aims to raise between \$5,000 and \$10,000 from this event. As of last week, two golfing clubs have already confirmed their participation, he said.

To raise more funds, the band will have a "We Are the World" concert on May 4 at Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, beginning at 6pm. Tudela said the event will have a raffle drawing where a total of \$10,000 in cash prizes await winners, including a \$5,000 grand prize.

Of the 3,000 tickets produced for the raffle, *Saipan Tribune* learned that only 1,500 have so far been sold to sponsors at \$50 each, which will entitle them to the concert performance. The Manta Band aims to raise \$100,000 from this raffle.

A tree-planting fundraiser is also coming up wherein com-

munity members will be asked to sponsor a flame tree for a fee. Tudela said that over 100 seedlings are being made available by the CNMI Forestry Division, with the assistance of CNMI Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan.

Other fundraising events are in the pipeline, including a mini-concert in collaboration with a Korean musical group. Solicitation efforts are also continuing.

The Manta Ray Band is slated to perform at the 2012 Olympics in the following events: adjudicated invitational concert at Queen Elizabeth's conference center with four or five other elite high school bands from around the world; a second performance for the current UN secretary general and his four predecessors as the Olympic torch is revealed in their presence; a concert on the grounds of the revered Westminster Abbey; and at least one show for Olympic audiences at a sporting venue.

Judge: Jorgensen's pleading only wasted court's time

» Judge tells lawyers to exercise civility, respect

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

The federal court has determined that attorney Bruce Jorgensen's pleading in connection with the lawsuit filed by two unnamed retirees against Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and the NMI Retirement Fund only wasted the court's time.

"It is the finding of this court that the pleading signed by Mr. Jorgensen contains arguments that lack relevance, legal authority or evidentiary support, which in turn has wasted the court's time," said U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge Frances M. Tydingco-Gatewood in an order issued Wednesday shortly after the hearing.

Tydingco-Gatewood gave Jorgensen 48 hours or until yesterday to consider withdrawing his motion and warned him that she will consider imposing fines and other sanctions if he fails to withdraw the motion.

"Moving forward, this court expects all counsels to proceed with civility and respect, both in the courtroom and in their pleadings," Tydingco-Gatewood said.

Saipan Tribune learned that Jorgensen complied with the order and withdrew the motion yesterday.

In a footnote to her order, Tydingco-Gatewood recognized that Jorgensen and co-counsels Margery Bronster and Robert Hatch failed to comply with the court order issued Monday requiring counsels to appear by videoconference at the hearing on Wednesday.

However, the judge said, she

will not issue an order of non-compliance against plaintiffs' counsels as the court believes that its stern warning and admonition are sufficient to deter the counsels from future non-compliance of court orders.

The defendants, through counsel Braddock Huesman, had asked the court to impose sanctions against Jorgensen.

Huesman claims that based on the plaintiffs' motion, which was signed by Jorgensen, the lawyer raised allegations about an alleged conflict of interest without a shred of evidence.

Huesman also cited that Jorgensen failed to base his motion on any case law or rule and instead relied on attacks on him (Huesman) and co-counsels.

During Wednesday's hearing on the motion for sanction, Tydingco-Gatewood appeared via videoconference. Jorgensen, Bronster, and Hatch appeared via telephone. Huesman, counsel for the Fund and its board of trustees, and assistant attorney general Michael Stanker, counsel for Fitial and the CNMI government, appeared in court.

Jorgensen, on behalf of two unnamed retirees, is suing Fitial and the Fund over alleged non-payment of their retirement benefits.

In a separate order on Wednesday, Tydingco-Gatewood granted a motion filed by the Fund, Fitial, and CNMI government, asking the court to compel Jorgensen and co-counsels to associate with local counsel. She gave Jorgensen and co-counsels 10 days to file with the court the name and contact information of the associated local counsel.

"The plaintiffs' attorneys must show good faith effort and due diligence of its attempt to associate with local counsel," she said.

Tydingco-Gatewood ordered Jorgensen and his co-counsels to submit evidence that they have attempted to contact at least 25 attorneys licensed to practice in the CNMI and that each of the contacted attorneys had refused association. In the event the plaintiffs' attorneys still fail to find a local counsel, Tydingco-Gatewood said the court will help them find one.

The defendants, through counsel Huesman, expressed the difficulty in serving the plaintiffs because their attorneys have provided at least two different mailing addresses, one of which refuses service and the other being defunct.

Jorgensen and co-counsels do not reside or maintain a law office in the NMI.

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GASOLINE

From Page 1

isn't very satisfying for a driver looking for someone to blame for his \$75 fill-up. Last year, the average price of gasoline was higher than ever, and it hasn't gotten any better this year. The average price nationwide is \$3.88 per gallon, the highest ever for March. Ten states and the District of Columbia are paying more than \$4.

Q: What determines the price of gasoline?

A: Mainly, it's the price of crude oil, which is used to make gasoline. Oil is a

global commodity, traded on exchanges around the world. The main U.S. oil benchmark has averaged \$103 per barrel this year. The oil used to make gasoline at many U.S. coastal refineries has averaged \$117 per barrel.

Oil prices have been high in recent months because global oil demand is expected to reach a record this year as the developing nations of Asia, Latin America and the Middle East increase their need for oil. There have also been minor supply disruptions in South Sudan, Syria and Nigeria. And oil prices have been pushed higher by traders worried that nuclear tensions with Iran could lead to more dramatic supply dis-

ruptions. Iran is the world's third largest exporter.

Q: How are gasoline prices set?

A: When an oil producer sells to a refiner, they generally agree to a price set on an exchange such as the New York Mercantile Exchange. After the oil is refined into gasoline, it is sold by the refiner to a distributor, again pegged to the price of wholesale gasoline on an exchange.

Finally, gas station owners set their own prices based on how much they paid for their last shipment, how much they will have to pay for their next shipment, and, perhaps most importantly, how much their competitor is charging.

those capital development funds, we wouldn't be in a situation right now, we won't attract investors because investors are looking for infrastructure, roads, utilities and so forth," he said.

And because the islands are a commonwealth of the U.S., they are not authorized to have direct access to foreign government assistance and have to depend on the U.S. government for capital funds.

He said central to the Covenant's establishment is to strengthen the economy and improve the lives of the people in the Commonwealth. Inos said there have been failures "in some areas and maybe a lot of it has to do with the political climate in Washington, D.C."

"It's not anyone's fault. It's the way how things work. The U.S. is also challenged by many issues," Inos added.

Today's event

Becky Santos, a Kagman resident, said there should be a Covenant Day celebration, instead of allowing it to be just another no-work or no-school holiday.

"There should be an event where the community could get together to listen to and discuss why and how this Covenant Day came about," the court employee said.

Inos, now the titular head of the Covenant Party, one of the political parties in the CNMI, is inviting the public to participate in today's celebration of Covenant Day at Minatchom Atdao in Susupe, from 10:30am to 3pm.

He said they would like to also invite those who were part of the team that negotiated the Covenant, to share their reflections and ideas about the significance of the Covenant and its relevance today.

"We should take a moment and even if we have some failures, we've got a lots of successes. We should take a moment and thank the Lord for the many successes that we have, for keeping us safe and giving us the confidence that we continuously do good...and hopefully our partners, the federal government and agencies will continue to look out for us and help us," he added.

The Covenant Party was formed by Gov. Benigno R. Fitial 11 years ago to support his gubernatorial bid, but he left the party last year to rejoin the Republican Party. While many followed the governor to the GOP, others including his runningmate Inos, Rep. Ralph Demapan (Cov-Saipan) and Rep. Edmund Villagomez (Cov-Saipan), have stayed with the Covenant.

The party could also announce its slate of candidates for the Nov. 6 midterm elections today.

Gas stations make very little profit on the sale of gasoline. They want to lure drivers into their convenience stores to buy coffee and soda.

Oil companies and refiners have to accept whatever price the market settles on—it has no relation to their cost of doing business. When oil prices are high, oil companies make a lot of money, but they can't force the price of oil up.

Q: Are oil prices manipulated by speculators on Wall Street?

A: Investment in oil futures contracts by pension funds, mutual funds, hedge funds, exchange traded funds and other investors who aren't going to actually use oil has risen dramatically in the last decade. Much of this money is betting that oil prices will rise. It is possible that this has inflated the price of oil—and therefore gasoline—somewhat. But investors can also bet that prices will go down, and they do. Studies of the effects of speculation on oil markets suggest that it probably increases volatility, but that it doesn't have a major effect on average prices.

Q: Are politicians to blame for high prices?

A: Politicians can't do much to affect gasoline prices because the market for oil is global. Allowing increased drilling in the U.S. would contribute only small amounts of oil to world supply, not nearly enough to affect prices. The Associated Press conducted a statistical analysis of 36 years of monthly inflation-adjusted gasoline prices and U.S. domestic oil production and found no statistical correlation between oil that comes out of U.S. wells and the price at the pump. Over the last three years, domestic oil production has risen and gasoline prices rose sharply. In the 1980s and 1990s, U.S. production fell dramatically, and prices did too.

Releasing oil from emergency supplies held in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve could lead to a temporary dip in prices, but the market might instead take it as a signal that there is even less oil supply in the world than thought, and bid prices higher. Any price relief from a release of reserves would be temporary.

Politicians can, however, help reduce the total amount drivers pay at

the pump. They could lower gasoline taxes and they can help get more fuel efficient cars into showrooms by mandating fuel economy improvements or subsidizing the cost of alternative-fueled vehicles. The first new fuel economy standards since 1990 are just now going into effect. Last summer the Obama Administration and automakers agreed to toughen standards further in 2016.

The U.S. fleet is now more fuel efficient than ever, and gasoline demand in the U.S. has fallen for 52 straight weeks. The U.S. is never again expected to consume as much gasoline as it did in 2006. That means that while drivers are paying more than they used to, they would have been paying much more if they consumed as much gasoline as they did in the middle of the last decade.

Q: Are prices high because the world is running out of oil?

A: Not yet. Prices are high because there's not a lot of oil that can be quickly and easily brought to market to meet demand or potential supply disruptions from natural disasters or political turmoil. Like most commodities, the need for oil is so great that people will pay almost anything, in the short term, to get their hands on what might be the last available barrel at any given moment.

But substantial new reserves of oil have been found in shale formations in the United States, in the Atlantic deep waters off of Africa and South America, and on the east coast of Africa. Canada has enormous reserves, and production is growing fast there. The Arctic, which is largely unexplored, is thought to have 25 percent of the world's known reserves.

All of this oil, however is hard to get and expensive to produce. That leads analysts to believe that oil will never stay much below \$60 a barrel for an extended period again. As soon as oil prices fall, producers will stop developing this expensive oil until demand, and high prices, return. Current high prices have fueled a boom in oil exploration that is sure to bring more crude to the market in coming years. But it is not here yet, so for now, pump prices—and frustration—are expected to remain high.

COVENANT

From Page 1

Northern Marianas and the United States, recognizing U.S. sovereignty but limiting, in some respects, applicability of federal law. The Commonwealth accordingly enjoys a greater degree of autonomy than most U.S. territories.

Inos said that changing that relationship "or to take a different route is probably not practical."

"I still hope that whenever the U.S. invokes the unilateral decision to assert certain provisions of the Covenant unilaterally, that they give due consideration to the plight of the CNMI. We read the preamble of the CNMI. [It is] essentially to promote the health and welfare and standard of living for the people of the Commonwealth," Inos said, adding that the central theme of the preamble has been generally achieved.

Noel Taisacan, an adjunct faculty member at Northern Marianas College teaching Natural History of the CNMI, said the Covenant is a "good document" and a "good agreement," but the relationship between the CNMI and the United States could be further improved.

"I just hope there's more recognition of the word 'consultation,'" he said.

Inos also recognizes the challenges, but said this may be a result of lack of or inadequate communication and consultation, as well as changes as a result of passage of time. He cited the importance of having a CNMI representative in the U.S. Congress.

Taisacan, a resident of Koblerville, said it's always good to reflect on the Covenant.

"The Covenant formally establishes our relationship with the United States, which forged our present-day Commonwealth... I am proud to be a United States citizen," he said.

Inos cited as examples of meaningful benefits to the CNMI its relationship with the United States, including the American flag that flies here, the application of U.S. laws that he said are "very disciplined and defined," the U.S. currency, and the U.S. banking system.

"Those elements, I should say, have given confidence to investors and tourists that this is in fact a good place to invest, to live...Why else would a lot of people want to go to the United States and seek residency, citizenship? Because of the American dream," he added.

A 14-year-old teen, in a separate interview yesterday, said he does not know what the Covenant is, or what Covenant Day means.

"It's not taught in school," he said.

But Taisacan, an educator, said children in the CNMI are not taught about CNMI history until the ninth grade and he believes this should change.

"I think basic CNMI history should be taught in the very beginning, and more in depth as they grow older," he said.

Covenant negotiations

The Covenant was negotiated over the course of 27 months or from December 1972 to February 1975 by the Marianas Political Status Commission, made up of representatives of the Northern Mariana Islands, and a delegation representing the United States.

The proposed Covenant was signed by negotiators on Feb. 15, 1975, and unanimously approved by the legislature of the Northern Mariana Islands District of the United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands on Feb. 17, 1975.

Four months later or on June 17, 1975, the Covenant was submitted to NMI voters in a plebiscite. At the time, 95 percent of eligible persons had registered to vote.

Of the 95 percent of all registered voters who cast ballots in the plebiscite, 78.8 percent voted to approve the Covenant.

The Covenant was subsequently approved by the U.S. House of Representatives on July 21, 1975, and by the U.S. Senate on Feb. 24, 1976.

On March 24, 1976, President Gerald Ford signed Public Law 94-241 (90 Stat. 263), enacting the Covenant. Some provisions became effective on that date, pursuant to Covenant Section 1003(a).

Remaining provisions became effective on Jan. 9, 1978, as well as on Nov. 4, 1986, when qualified residents of the Northern Mariana Islands became U.S. citizens.

Covenant Section 105 provides that many provisions of the Covenant may be modified only with the joint consent of the U.S. and Commonwealth governments.

On Nov. 28, 2009, CNMI immigration also came under federal control.

Inos said in the first seven years of the Covenant, the CNMI was getting \$10 million a year for its operations. This went down to \$7 million "and as we built our local capacity and generate revenues, then those direct assistance for operations have continuously gone down."

"But on the other side we've got the capital development funds, which have been provided to us and it's up to a billion of dollars. Those funds made a lot of difference...to build infrastructure, and that's basis for economic growth. If we didn't have those, we wouldn't have the kind of economic state and although we would like to see more, without

MAFNAS

From Page 1

In the statement yesterday, Mafnas said "it is best to let the facts and evidence speak for themselves." He said he chooses not to subject himself to trial by court of public opinion.

Mafnas said the sites of the allegations against him took place at popular tourist sites in broad daylight and in plain view of visitors and others present.

"I've always stood up and defended the right to due process and the constitutional rights of people. On the same breathe (sic), I intend to pursue justice against all odds, schemes, and lies," he said.

The commissioner challenged anyone to bring him and his accusers before the court rather than "resort to injurious lies, cunning and schemes in public."

Mafnas threatened those responsible "for bearing false witness and making false charges" against him with criminal and civil liabilities, including those who aided and abetted in such acts.

He vowed to continue his quest to rid DPS of "unacceptable and corrupt

practices and outright waste of taxpayer-funded resources and breach of public trust and confidence."

Mafnas also disclosed that in the case of murdered bartender Emerita Romero, he said he is saddened that "three to four sore senior officers" within DPS "place their interests first and above that of the people of the CNMI and the welfare of the men and women in the department."

Mafnas said there is absolutely no substance or evidence to support the allegation that he deliberately interfered with the investigation in the Romero case. He said he is ultimately responsible for issuing orders to preserve the integrity of the investigation and maintain the strength and investigative edge necessary to prevail.

Mafnas said that once the Romero case is finally determined, the truth will be revealed for everyone to see that he provided the "leadership and guidance to achieve the desired outcome and allow justice to take its course."

Yesterday, *Saipan Tribune* received a complaint from a motorist who also narrated his "encounter" with Mafnas. *Saipan Tribune* opted not to write the allegations in the meantime until Mafnas has stated his side.

Fitial names Rosario to Election Commission board

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has appointed Joseph P. Rosario to the Commonwealth Election Commission board. The appointment requires the advice and consent of the Senate.

In a letter to Rosario, the governor indicated that the

new member will represent Saipan and serve the unexpired term of Elizabeth DLG. Aldan, which will expire on Aug. 8, 2013.

Aldan quit her post in August 2011 after 11 years of serving the election board.

Pursuant to the law, Rosario is required to file a statement of financial interest with the

public auditor and provide copy of his resume, police clearance, drug test receipt and result to the Senate before his confirmation.

Fitial said the administration is confident that Rosario is qualified and will be an asset to the election board. A letter of endorsement was also sent by the governor to Senate Presi-

dent Paul Manglona asking for the Senate's favorable action on Rosario's appointment.

The CEC board has nine members, five of whom represent Saipan and two each represent Tinian and Rota. Each member is assigned a four-year term. At present, there are three vacancies on the commission. Current members include Fran-

ces Sablan, Jose Kiyoshi, Jesus Sablan, Leilani Manglona, Antonio Agulto, and Josepha Barcinas.

During the re-election of Frances Sablan as board chairperson, she emphasized the need to fill all vacant board positions for the upcoming election. She then told *Saipan Tribune* that she will submit

recommendations for these vacancies.

Compared to other board and commissions, the electoral board needs three quarters of the full membership to pass a decision, which means 6 to 7 members are needed to vote in the affirmative. Five members are needed to be present in order to get a quorum.

IT&E donates \$5K, named Pacifica sponsor of Flame Tree Festival

Telecommunications company IT&E has been named the latest Pacifica sponsor for the 31st Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival to be hosted by the Arts Council next month.

Marketing manager Hans Mickelson presented \$2,000 cash and \$3,000 worth of in-kind donations to festival committee members in a brief ceremony at the IT&E Chalan Lau Lau office yesterday.

The Pacifica sponsorship status is given to companies, organizations or individuals who provide monetary or in-kind donations worth \$5,000 or more.

Mickelson said IT&E has been supporting the Flame Tree Arts Festival for about a decade now or back when it was still known as Verizon and is once again happy to support the annual event.

"The festival is an opportunity for the public to view the



IT&E marketing manager Hans Mickelson, center, presents the \$2,000 donation to the 31st Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival committee members, from left, overall committee chair Parker Y. Yobei, Remy Buniag, Rhonda Nogis, and Arts Council executive director Angel S. Hocog, in a brief ceremony at the IT&E Chalan Lau Lau office on Wednesday.

great works of art of our local artists and, at the same time, a chance for people to get together and enjoy the program, be with

friends, and have a great time," he added.

The Flame Tree Arts Festival is the biggest annual festi-

val celebrating the rich art and cultural heritage of the Commonwealth. The 31st edition of the festival will be held at

the Civic Center Park in Susupe from April 20 to 22. During the three-day event, IT&E will set up a booth where festival goers can purchase prepaid phones and prepaid cards.

Arts Council executive director Angel S. Hocog expressed on behalf of the festival committee their gratitude for the "unwavering support" of one of the long-standing sponsors of the annual event.

"IT&E's \$5,000 sponsorship undoubtedly recognizes its commitment in the perpetuation of local arts and culture," he said. (Clarissa V. David)

CLARISSA V. DAVID

USCG Auxiliary Guam wins outstanding flotilla of the year



The award was presented by the USCG Auxiliary National Commodore, James Vass, USCG District 14 Commander, RADM Charles W. Ray, and USCG Auxiliary District 14 Commodore Burkhard Berger at the Waikiki Yacht Club, Honolulu, Hawaii on March 3, 2012. Pictured left to right: Daniel Berman (Guam), Saipan Flotilla Commander Dennis Chapla, G.W. "Frank" Gumataotao (Guam), National Commodore Vass, Guam Flotilla Commander Jack Ary, RADM Ray, and Robert Sajnovsky (Guam).

The local United States Coast Guard Auxiliary flotilla placed first in the District-wide competition for Outstanding Flotilla of the Year out of the 14 flotillas in Coast Guard District 14, which covers Hawaii, Guam, Saipan, and American Samoa.

The award is based on outstanding performance in all areas of the Auxiliary's programs in 2011, which includes public education, vessel safety checks, marine dealer visits, and operations.

Flotilla Commander Jack Ary was on hand to accept the honor on behalf of Guam Flotilla 140-02-24 at the District awards banquet in Honolulu, Hawaii.

"The hard work and dedica-

tion of the membership as well as the capable and professional leadership of the active duty team Coast Guard in Guam made this possible," said Ary. "It is important to also recognize the now fully independent Saipan Flotilla 140-2-02-29 who significantly contributed to and shares in the success of the Guam Flotilla for the competitive period."

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, the uniformed civilian all-volunteer component of Team Coast Guard assists the active duty Coast Guard in many of its varied missions. These men and women can be found on the nation's waterways, in

the air, in classrooms, and on the dock, performing Maritime Domain Awareness patrols, safety patrols, vessel safety checks and public education.

The Coast Guard Auxiliary was founded in 1939 by an Act of Congress as the U. S. Coast Guard Reserve and re-designated the Auxiliary in 1941. Its over 32,000 members contribute millions of hours annually in support of Coast Guard missions. Are you interested in joining or learning more about the Coast Guard Auxiliary in Guam and throughout the region? Contact Flotilla Commander Jack Ary at (671)483-5225 or jary@tele-guam.net. (USCG)

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS



Happy 73rd birthday to my "Mama," Anunciacion C. Magofia (Asako), who is celebrating her special day tomorrow, March 25, 2012. May you enjoy your special day and be blessed with more wonderful years to come! We love you Mama! Greetings come from Froilan Jr., Katrina, Froilan Gregory, Kiana, and Alana Rita.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Happy birthday greetings go out to Covey Santiago Borja Mendiola, who is celebrating his birthday today, March 24, 2012, down on Tinian! Greetings come from daddy Godfrey, mommy Liza, sisters Florencia, Kristina, Legaine and Nadia, and brother Godfrey II, also from si grandma Chenchu. Wish you enjoy your special day and many more to come!

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



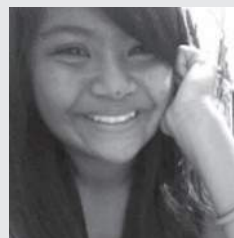
Advanced happy birthday to Diane Muña Masga-Sablan, who will be celebrating her special day tomorrow, March 25! May you have many more birthdays to come, God bless, and enjoy your special day. We love you very much! Greetings come from Jose, Ryan, Randall, Jodian, Michelle Sablan and children, the Masga, friends and family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Happy birthday mom/grandma Delia S. Dado! May God bless you on this special day and many more to come. We love you so much! Greetings from your children and grandchildren.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Happy 13th birthday to Precious Pascual! May God bless you and bless you with many more birthdays to come. We hope you will enjoy your special day! Remember, we love you always. Greetings come from your parents, Ronaldo and Tessie, and your siblings Aljo, Kristoffer, and Xyriel Jade.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Wishing a happy birthday to our handsome husband and father, Wilson Piamonte Tadeo, who is celebrating his 50th birthday on March 24! As you grow older may the good lord continue to bless and guide you. We love you always and forever. Hugs and kisses comes from your wife, Melva Ann, and your three kids Vinicia, Shaun, and Wilson Jr. and also friends and families that loves you also.



Happy 62nd birthday to Maria B. Camacho! Enjoy your special day and may you have many more birthdays to come. Greetings come from the family and friends.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

Soldier's problems not uncommon, only his solution

Even before U.S. officials identified Staff Sgt. Robert Bales as the suspect in the grisly mass murder in Afghanistan, clues about his past had been leaking out and accelerated with his naming.

A "model soldier," some colleagues said. At 38, more mature and stable than many the United States sends to fight. Veteran of three tours to Iraq, a humble warrior who described his service to neighbors as "just his job."

There's more, of course. A 2002 arrest for assaulting a girlfriend. A drunken-driving arrest in 2005. A hit-and-run charge, later dismissed, from 2008. Disappointment at being passed over for promotion. Rumored marital problems, denied by his attorney.

Resistance to another overseas tour, this one to Afghanistan in December. Possible post-traumatic stress disorder from a brain injury and losing part of a foot. Indications that he saw a colleague blown up the night before his rampage. Drinking alcohol on base in Afghanistan, against orders.

And a history of fraud stemming from his pre-Army days as a stock trader, including a \$1.4 million judgment for swindling an elderly Ohio couple. Two underwater mortgages for homes near Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.

In tough economic times, too many Americans are upside-down on their mortgages. Tens of thousands struggle with workplace disappointment. Many have minor criminal records; many more might not always get along with their spouses. And, yes, many of them serve with honor in the U.S. military.

Do Bales' clues add up to stalking and shooting innocent civilians, including women and young children, in a war zone, and burning their bodies? Festering grievance, frustration over life's rough spots, is not uncommon. Mass murder is.

The fact remains that this is what happened in Panjwai district in southern Afghanistan, as the U.S. mission, more than a decade old, faces increased difficulty and scrutiny. Bales' act, as alleged, would rank among the most heinous war crimes in American history.

What the Army must reconcile is whether Bales was fit to serve and should have been sent in again. Did the Army miss indicators, as it did with Maj. Nidal Hasan, the Fort Hood gunman? He, too, told superiors he did not want to go over, although in his case it was for reasons of Muslim faith.

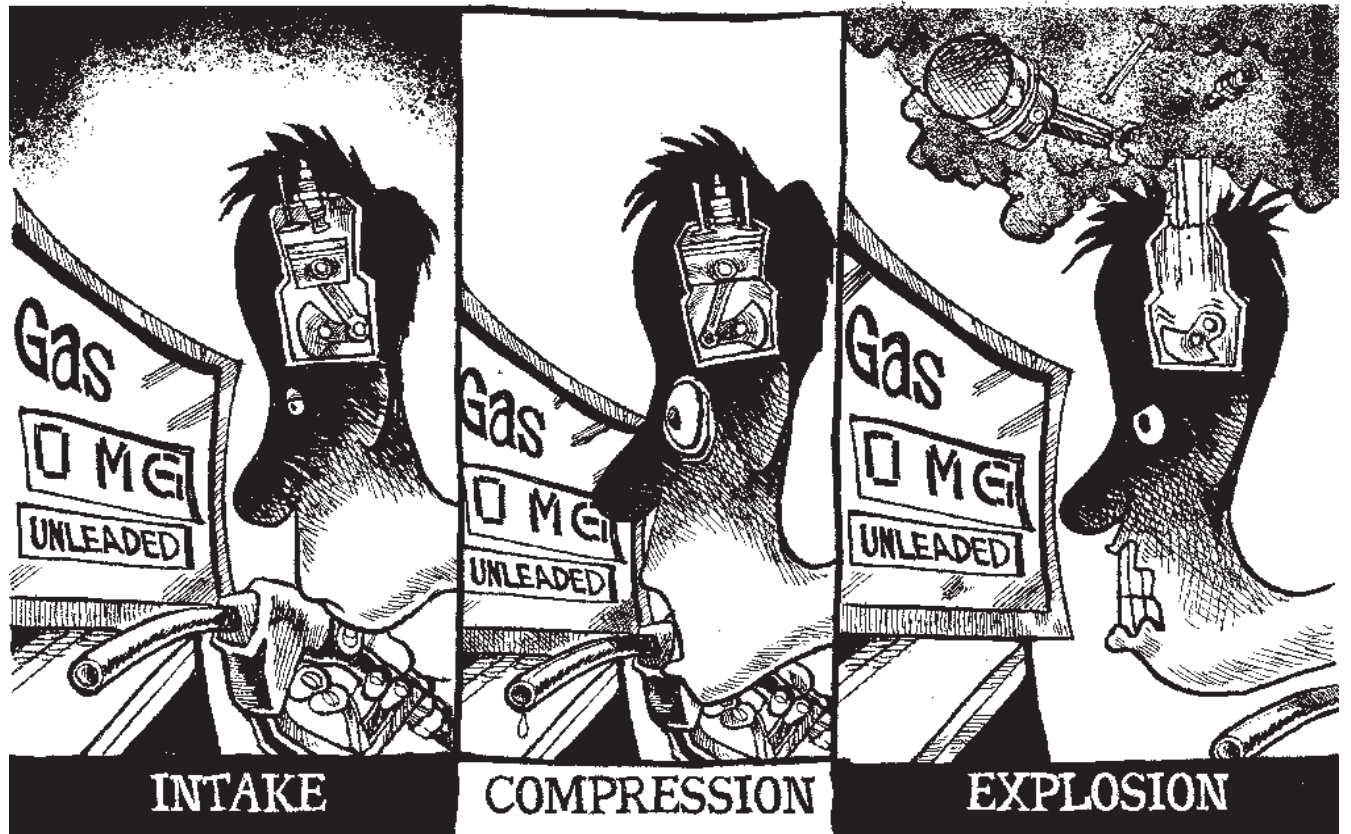
Does the U.S. military have sufficient safeguards in place to screen its members? Did repeated overseas deployments in an all-volunteer era place inordinate stress on an embittered Army staff sergeant already wrestling with problems at home?

No matter your position on war and America's place in the world, these questions demand answers. Ultimately, Bales will be held accountable for his actions. It would be absurd to believe that the Army sent him into battle to massacre civilians, but if the Army missed or ignored factors that may have contributed to his crimes, it must be held accountable, too.

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HOW AN INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE WORKS.

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Sure you can go home again

It was the week before my 23rd birthday when it hit me. "You know," I said casually to my mom as we drove into town to get pedicures, "I don't think I've hung out with anyone my age in over a month."

It was true. Almost a year out of college and here I was, living at home and socializing decades above my age group. I shopped for groceries and made dinner every night. I watched "The Daily Show" with my mom and went to a Wilco concert with my dad. I took my grandma to movies nominated for best picture and, for the first (and hopefully only) time in my life, when the Academy Awards rolled around, I'd seen them all.

Strangest of all, I was happy. After six months on a biodynamic farm with a rampant mouse problem and a refrigerator that didn't close, my baby blue room felt like a luxury. After four years of dorm living in New York City, with fire alarms that wrenched us from bed at 2:30 a.m., cursing whatever drunk sophomore had pulled the emergency lever "for fun," I appreciated the quiet. I loved having a house to myself, 9 to 5. I loved hosting elaborate meals for my parents' friends, the overworked adults sighing with relief into their glasses of wine. I loved my parents, come to that, and the long conversations we had on world events prompted by my hours in the kitchen listening to NPR.

Is it so wrong, I wondered guiltily to myself, to actually like living at home?

At the carwash on a weekday morning waiting for my parents' Volvo to emerge, the answer seemed especially dire. As I admired his adorable toddler, a Mercedes-owning father turned to me with a smile. "Do you have kids?"

It wasn't that I'd given up on starting my own life. Every morning at 7 I dutifully staked out my spot at the kitchen table, sifting through job postings and honing my resume. The optimism with which I began my job search was—to my now appropriately jaded self—staggering. My applications ran the gamut from Green For All to Google. I prided myself on cover letters that used neat little turns of phrase like "excellent and intuitive" and "positive and professional." I checked my Gmail constantly, confident in my ability to make an impression.

I heard back from no one.

Slowly it began to dawn on me that living at home was, perhaps, going to be a long-term thing. The "quick stopover" fantasy I'd indulged over the holidays was harder to maintain when my sister went back to school. Instead of brightly telling people I'd be home for "maybe a couple more weeks," I mumbled incoherently and changed the subject. I got a gym membership. The neighbors recognized me. I stopped buying shoes with money from "the job I'd have soon."

And then, strangely, I started to like living at home. I kept up the applications, but I also began working part time for a local filmmaker. I started volunteering at the public radio station that had be-

By SARA BARBOUR

Los Angeles Times

Sara Barbour is a writer (and job seeker) who blogs about food and family at girlfarmkitchen.com. She wrote this for the Los Angeles Times.



come my closest companion. I cooked, I flossed daily, I organized my parents' CDs. And when no one else was home (on average, six to eight hours a day) I cranked up the stereo and listened to a song called "Happiness" on repeat.

After a vibrant college life, it's hard to move home without feeling at least a twinge of failure. It's demoralizing to offer yourself up—all the college prep, the hours of internships, the years spent working for free—and come away not just rejected but unacknowledged. Under my parents' roof once again, the benefits were obvious (food, rent-free housing, a washing machine that worked), but so were the difficulties.

Miles from the nearest big city and car-less, I didn't just feel stranded, I often actually was. The stigma of joblessness greeted me everywhere, from newly employed peers to a local J. Crew clerk ("Shouldn't you be in school?" she asked, eyeing the outdated student ID that I proffered for a discount). And then there were the moments when I felt like a teenager all over again: Arriving home late from my first dinner out on a date in weeks, I was summoned to my parents' room and greeted with reproachful looks.

But there's a reason most of the world lives in extended family units. They provide the kind of community that carries the depth and perspective of many generations. I may have grown up primed for immediate employment, but the last time my grandma had a job was in the 1960s. My mom lived with her parents until she was married. My generation was seared with the terrorizing ultimatum that come graduation we'd better be hired—think of the college loans! the American dream!—because financial independence was the ultimate predictor of success. Unfortunately, that's not an automatic option, but my sense of self-worth is deepened through providing for my family in the ways I can—cooking, cleaning, heck, even getting the car washed—while gratefully acknowledging their willingness to provide for me.

So here's my advice to those in the class of 2012 who fear the great Move Home: Be thankful you have one. Don't stop your search for the job or opportunity that will get you into that first apartment, but appreciate your family and the ways you can help them. There are worse (if less embarrassing) things than having to lean on a social structure that is meant to provide support. And it wouldn't hurt to start being nice to Mom and Dad.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

The NMI Retirement Fund financial crisis

Dear retirees and beneficiaries: Like all of you, the Senate has been extremely concerned about the critical condition of the NMI Retirement Fund today. Currently, the Fund has approximately 2,940 retirees or beneficiaries and 2,996 active employees. These retirees, beneficiaries, and active employees are all affected by the solvency of the Fund, which has a lifespan of approximately two years. The Fund draws down over \$50 million every year to pay retirees' and beneficiaries' pension benefits, and requires \$400 million today to carry it through the next 10 years. Therefore, drastic actions must be taken today to prevent the Retirement Fund from collapsing.

The Fund is in a financial crisis mainly due to the central government's failure to remit the actuarially determined employer contributions of active employees. This forces the Fund to draw down or liquidate its assets to pay out pensions, thereby diminishing the Fund's corpus and investments. In 2006, the Retirement Fund filed a lawsuit against the central government for failure to remit employer contributions, to fund unfunded liabilities, and to declare unconstitutional Public Law 15-15, among other things. In 2009, the court ordered the CNMI government to pay \$231 million (now \$317 million) to the Fund. Moreover, each year the Legislature appropriates money to the Retirement Fund but only a fraction of the funds is remitted to the Fund.

In the past several years, the Fund repeatedly warned the governor and legislators of the impending demise of the Fund if money is not infused into the retirement system. The Fund transmitted numerous

letters and notices to the governor and legislators regarding the dire situation at the Fund. Moreover, the Fund administrator, legal team, trustees, and consultants have marched to the governor's office and the Legislature to express in person the critical nature of the retirement fund system. In response to the Fund's warning and requests for assistance, I created a Special Committee on Retirement Issues to collaborate and offer recommendations on how to resolve the Fund's issues. The special committee is chaired by Sen. Jovita M. Taimanao and composed of other senators, the Fund administrator, the Fund's legal counsel, and chairman of the board of trustees, as well as a representative from the Commonwealth Retirement Association. The special committee held meetings at the Legislature on Nov. 16, 2011, Nov. 29, 2011, Dec. 7, 2011, Dec. 14, 2011, Dec. 21, 2011, Dec. 28, 2011, Jan. 4, 2012, and Jan. 19, 2012, to address the issues. The special committee held a public hearing on Rota on Feb. 2, 2012, Tinian on Feb. 8 and Saipan Feb. 28 and March 6 to give retirees an opportunity to express their concerns and offer solutions to the problems at the Fund. The special committee continues to meet to discuss issues regarding the Fund.

Additionally, the members of the Senate introduced and passed several bills aimed at improving the financial situation of the Fund. These bills include, 1. SLI 17-13 (transfer public land golf courses to Fund); 2. SLI 17-14 (MPLT interest to Fund); 3. SLI 17-15 (set aside \$25 percent of the annual budget for Fund); 4. SLI 17-16 (transfer life/health insurance to DOF); 5. SB 17-35 (transfer special benefits of gov./lt. gov to DOF); 6. SB17-36 (no new adopted children); 7.

By PAUL A. MANGLONA

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Paul A. Manglona is the Senate president of the 17th Legislature.



SB 17-96 (transfer prime government properties to Fund); and 8. SB 17-99 (transfer life/health insurance to DOF). The Senate awaits the passage of several other Fund supported legislation from the House of Representatives including: 1. HLI 17-05 (pension obligation bond); 2. HB 17-100 (RF reorganization); and 3. HB 17-217 (percentage of rebate to Fund). The House of Representative must act swiftly and pass all Fund supported legislation. The aforementioned legislation is intended to rehabilitate and infuse more cash into the Fund.

On March 13-14, 2012, the Superior Court in the *Retirement Fund vs. CNMI* case invited the government and interested parties to testify regarding the Fund's issues and problems. The only government body that attended and spoke at the hearing was the Senate, represented by Sen. Ralph DLG. Torres, Sen. Pete P. Reyes, and myself. There were no representatives from the governor's office. Although a few members of the House of Representatives were present, no one contributed to the discussion at the hearing. After listening to the concerns and possible solutions to the Fund's crisis, the court set a deadline of June 15, 2012, for the government and the Fund to find an "agreed upon solution" to the Fund fiasco. A hearing is set for June 29, 2012, to discuss solutions, if any. If not, the court will accept petitions for receivership of the Fund. That means that the receiver, through court approval, will decide on how to prolong the Fund's life, which will include but not limited to, significantly reducing pension benefits.

I write this to urge all retirees and beneficiaries to march up to the governor's office and the Legislature and demand immediate attention to the Fund's emergency. The Senate created a special committee, passed bills, held public hearings, attended court hearings, and urged its colleagues in the House of Representatives and the governor to act now and address the Fund's critical status, but to no avail. Time is of the essence! We don't have time to waste on this issue. The Fund's lifespan of two years is unacceptable, and the government official's inaction and indifference to the emergency at hand is disturbing and alarming.

The Senate stands ready to assist the Fund. The Senate has always been ready to participate in a round-table discussion to save the Fund. The Senate Special Committee on Retirement Fund Issues has done its due diligence to address the matter and offer recommendations. Additionally, the Senate passed important bills that would reduce the Fund's expenditures and increase its funding capacity. However, the Senate cannot save the Fund alone. The Senate cannot single-handedly assist the Fund. We need the House of Representatives and especially the governor to prioritize and act on the Fund's issues to prevent the taking away of money from you, the retirees, through the reduction of your pension benefits.

Once again, the Senate urges the retirees and beneficiaries to take a stand and demand action from their elected leaders. We were elected to lead the people, to protect the people, and to provide for the people. We were elected to protect and preserve the Fund. With this, we ask for your indulgence and support to engage the House of Representatives and the governor in saving and rehabilitating the NMI Retirement Fund for the benefit of the people of the Commonwealth.

Letter to the Editor

Thank you

To the CUC line crew: I want thank the CUC line crew people for clearing tree branches from power lines and putting up a street light in one of the darkest areas in Kagman. This was unexpected as I came home from work and was delighted to see the changes. Thank you for making our place safer and for being able to see at night.

Raymond Cruz
Kagman III, Saipan

Don't close the GOP show

We in the mainstream media harbor a dirty little secret: Most of us are rooting for Rick Santorum. It's nothing personal, although Santorum is a reasonably appealing guy. And it's not ideological; most of us aren't yearning for Bible-based social conservatism to become the law of the land. It's worse than that. We're just hoping to see the gaudy spectacle of this primary campaign continue as long as possible.

If Santorum can't win—and sober analysts, weighing the demographics of the remaining states, warn that his prospects are slim—there's still a chance for the contest to continue. The combination of Santorum, Newt Gingrich and Ron Paul might still somehow block Mitt Romney, the once-again front-runner, from amassing the 1,144 delegates he needs to win the nomination on the first ballot. That's what I'm hoping for.

Why? Simple curiosity. The last open convention was in 1976, when Gerald R. Ford beat Ronald Reagan; many of this year's campaign reporters weren't even born then. We media types all have our tickets for Tampa, and the prospect of covering a real live battle there fills us with delight.

But the hopes of those of us in the Chaos Caucus are flagging. This week's Illinois primary made it appear ever more likely that Romney is heading toward a majority of delegates, and the only real question is how long it will take.

In Illinois, Romney won 47 percent of the votes and at least 41 of the 54 delegates, another step in his plodding but remorseless march toward a majority. Santorum, the last great hope of anti-Romney conservatives, was held to 35 percent. He didn't even win among Catholics; they went for the Mormon.

Maybe it's time for Santorum to bring back the sweater vest. Last month, after he began to look like a real contender, he switched to a blue blazer and necktie to appear more presidential. He slipped into the royal "we" more often, as in "We're the candidate that's got vision." It isn't working.

For a while, Santorum was emphasizing proposals to stimulate a revival of American manufacturing, an appealing pitch to blue-collar voters. But in recent weeks, he's shifted to a broader small-government message embodied in the one-word banner—"Freedom"—that unfurled behind him this week. That's an appeal to tea party voters, who make up a big chunk of the GOP electorate in Wisconsin and the other states he needs to win.

His problem is that he's not alone; Mitt Romney wants those tea party voters too. On Tuesday night in Illinois, Romney sounded like Ayn Rand. He boiled his campaign down to two words: "economic freedom."

It remains to be seen whether the tea party zeal of 2010 will still be there when the general election campaign begins in September. But if it's not, Romney adviser Eric Fehrnstrom said Wednesday,

By DOYLE MCMANUS

Los Angeles Times

Doyle McManus is a columnist for The Los Angeles Times. Readers may send him email at doyle.mcmanus@latimes.com.



no worries; they'll just roll out a new, improved general-election Romney.

"I think you hit a reset button for the fall campaign. Everything changes," Fehrnstrom told CNN. "It's almost like an Etch-A-Sketch. You can kind of shake it up and restart all over again."

Gingrich didn't even show up in Illinois; he finished in last place, with only 8 percent of the vote. It's become clear that he isn't running for president anymore; he's dropped any pretense that he thinks he can win the nomination. Instead, he's running for kingmaker. He wants to control enough delegates to make a difference at the convention. The only problem with that strategy is that there don't seem to be many voters who share that lofty vision.

Meanwhile, though, Gingrich is enjoying himself on the campaign trail—still expounding on space exploration to ever-dwindling rallies but also making time for excursions to zoos, historic sites and good restaurants. (Last week it was New Orleans' venerable Galatoire's, followed by a meeting with an elephant at the Audubon Zoo.) Financial filings this week disclosed that casino mogul Sheldon Adelson sent an additional \$5.5 million to Gingrich's "super PAC" in February, bringing the Adelson family total to \$16 million and making it easier for the Gingrich juggernaut to keep rolling—whether voters want him or not.

Is Paul still running? He is, but he appears to have put his campaign on autopilot and retired to the stateroom for a nap. That makes his third-place showing in Illinois, a nose ahead of Gingrich, all the more impressive.






In fact, the end of the televised debates deprived both Gingrich and Paul of much of their oxygen. The horse race stories in the media, preoccupied with the grubby question of who might actually win, now focus almost entirely on the two-man contest between Romney and Santorum. In a sense, we've had two distinct primary campaigns: a chaotic phase with debates that lasted until Romney won the Michigan primary on Feb. 28, and a more stable contest without debates since then. I miss the debates—but then, I've already made my bias clear.

Still, for those of us who like chaos and spectacle in our politics, there's still a glimmer of hope on the northern horizon. Sarah Palin says that if the convention deadlocks, she's available.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
				
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼76°	▲86° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°	▲86° ▼76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲86 ▼77
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲85 ▼76
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲88 ▼77
Chuuk	Mostly Sunny	▲91 ▼79
Pohnpei	Sunny	▲85 ▼79
Kosrae	Sunny	▲85 ▼79
Majuro	Showers	▲85 ▼79

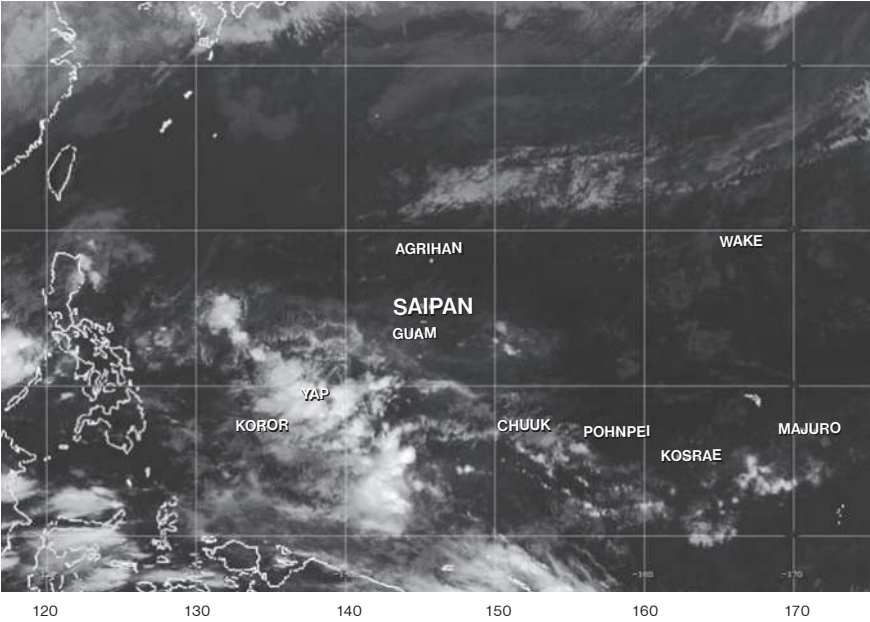
Around The Globe

Auckland	Rain	▲67 ▼65
Beijing	Sunny	▲58 ▼32
Hong Kong	Sunny	▲66 ▼60
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲78 ▼69
London	Sunny	▲65 ▼43
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲66 ▼49
Manila	Thundershowers	▲88 ▼79
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲68 ▼51
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲84 ▼69
New York	Showers	▲58 ▼49
Osaka	Showers	▲50 ▼38
Paris	Sunny	▲70 ▼44
Pusan	Sunny	▲52 ▼35
Rome	Showers	▲71 ▼48
Salem	Showers	▲60 ▼40
San Francisco	Rain	▲51 ▼45
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲47 ▼29
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	▲54 ▼37
Washington, DC	Showers	▲69 ▼58

Tides

Saipan Harbor				
3:48 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.6 Feet	
9:25 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet	
4:08 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet	
10:15 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet	

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, FRIDAY, MARCH 23, 2012
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A surface trough stretches southeastward from 5N130E through a weak circulation centered southwest of Chuuk near 3N148E to end at EQ151E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are occurring over Yap and south of the Marianas between 11N and 2N from 137E to 151E. Low-level convergence northeast of the circulation is triggering scattered showers and a few thunderstorms over Chuuk within 50 miles of a line from 8N151E to 5N157E. A weak trade-wind disturbance is generating scattered showers and a few thunderstorms northwest of Koror between 14N and 11N from 130E to 133E. A cold front extends southwestward from 25N164E to end northwest of the Marianas near 21N140E. Cloudiness and scattered light showers are found along and up to 200 miles northwest of this boundary.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:18 AM	6:28 PM
Sunday	6:18 AM	6:29 PM
Monday	6:17 AM	6:29 PM
Tuesday	6:16 AM	6:29 PM
Wednesday	6:15 AM	6:29 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	6:58 AM	7:45 PM
Sunday	7:37 AM	8:34 PM
Monday	8:19 AM	9:23 PM
Tuesday	9:02 AM	10:13 PM
Wednesday	9:48 AM	11:03 PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMUT SARI
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

■ **CAMPUS BULLETIN**
Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

■ Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 11, 2012

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP) C05062 2:10am 2:40am 1, 5	ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM) C05064 5:15am 5:45am 1, 5
SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP) C05064 4:15am 4:50am 1, 5	ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN) C05062 3:10am 3:45am 1, 5
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM) C05064 4:15am 5:45am 1, 5 via ROP C05070 4:35am 5:25am 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 C05068 8:25am 9:15am Daily C05074 12:10pm 1:00pm 1, 4, 5, 7 C05076 3:10pm 4:00pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05078 6:50pm 7:40pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05078 7:00pm 7:50pm 3, 6 C05072 9:55pm 10:45pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05072 10:05pm 10:55pm 3, 6	GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN C05062 2:10am 3:45am 1, 5 via ROP C05069 2:45am 3:35am 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 C05071 7:00am 7:50am Daily C05073 10:05am 10:55am 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05075 1:40pm 2:30pm 1, 4, 5, 7 C05077 5:30pm 6:20pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05077 5:40pm 6:30pm 3, 6 C05079 8:35pm 9:25pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05079 8:45pm 9:35pm 3, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT) DL287 6:00am 8:40am Daily DL285 6:35am 9:15am 1, 3, 5, 7 DL297 4:25pm 7:15pm Daily	NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN DL298 10:25am 3:00pm Daily DL288 8:40pm 1:15am+1 Daily DL286 7:40pm 12:20am+1 2, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX) OZ119 4:00am 6:40am Daily	OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN OZ120 9:50pm 2:20am+1 Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN) OZ606 2:10am 6:00am 1 OZ606 2:40am 6:30am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 OZ119 4:00am 11:20am Daily via KIX OZ604 3:20pm 7:10pm Daily	SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN OZ603 9:00am 2:20pm Daily OZ120 7:10pm 2:20am+1 Daily via KIX OZ605 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ605 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS) OZ608 3:35am 7:05am 4, 7 DL581 4:10am 7:30am 1, 5	BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN OZ607 9:00pm 2:20am+1 3, 6 DL580 10:10pm 2:55am+1 4, 7
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN) 3U8646 4:20am 7:30am 2, 6	GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN 3U8645 7:40pm 3:00am+1 1, 5
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG) 3U8648 6:10am 8:40am 1, 4, 5, 7	SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN 3U8647 10:40pm 5:00am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL) OZ606/701 2:10am 11:15am 1 via ICN OZ606/701 2:40am 11:15am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN C05070/191 4:35am 9:45am 3, 6 via GUM DL287/173 6:00am 10:25pm Daily via NRT C05068/183 8:25am 9:25pm 2, 5 via GUM C05068/183 8:25am 9:40pm 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM C05076/183 3:10pm 9:25pm 2, 5 via GUM C05076/183 3:10pm 9:40pm 1, 4, 7 via GUM C05076/193 3:10pm 11:00pm 2, 5 via GUM-Palau OZ604/703 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN C05072/PR111 9:55pm 7:50am+1 1, 5, 7 via GUM C05072/PR111 10:05pm 7:50am+1 3, 6 via GUM	MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN DL172/288 8:00am 1:15am+1 Daily via NRT C0190/5077 10:55am 6:30pm 3, 6 via GUM C0190/5079 10:55am 9:35pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN PR110/C05071 10:15pm 7:50am+1 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM C0192/5071 10:25pm 7:50am+1 2, 5 via GUM-Palau C0184/5071 11:10pm 7:50am+1 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM OZ704/603 11:40pm 2:20pm Daily via ICN C0184/5071 11:59pm 7:50am+1 2, 5 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG) OZ606/721 2:10am 12:00pm 1 via ICN OZ606/721 2:40am 12:00pm 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN C05076/147 3:10pm 10:25pm 1, 5 via GUM OZ604/723 3:20pm 10:30pm Daily via ICN OZ604/749 3:20pm 10:50pm Daily via ICN	HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN OZ724/603 12:30am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ750/603 1:00am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN C0180/5071 11:15pm 7:50am+1 1, 5 via GUM
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana	
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The <i>Saipan Tribune</i> is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)	

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 100	17:50	18:20	Daily	Tinian-Saipan			
Saipan-Rota				FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily				
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily				



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

SCHEDULE OF RELIGIOUS SERVICES			
CATHOLIC 			
Mt. Carmel Cathedral Sunday Mass: 6am Chamorro, 9am English, 11am Filipino and 6pm English Monday-Saturday: 6am Chamorro Wednesday: 6pm Chamorro Parish office hours: Monday-Saturday 8am-12pm, 12-1pm, 1-5pm			
Korean Center Sunday: 10:30am Wednesday: 10am Thursday-Friday: 8pm Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm			
Kristo Rai Parish Sunday- Saturday: 6am Wednesday: 6am and 6pm (PH Novena 5:45pm) Friday: 5:30pm praying of Divine Mercy Chaplet; 6pm devotional mass in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Saturday: 6am and 6pm (anticipated) Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am 6pm Tagalog mass Parish office hours: (Fr. Celso G. Magbanua) Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday 8-11:30am/ 3-5:30pm, Wednesday and Friday 3-5pm. Telephone no. 285-0273			
Santa Soledad Mission Parish Monday: 6pm Tuesday: 6pm Wednesday: 6pm Friday: 6pm Saturday: 6pm (Youth mass/ anticipated Sunday mass) Sunday: 7am and 9am (Children's mass) Parish office hours: Wednesday and Friday: 8-10am, Saturday: 4-6pm Telephone no. 256-4568			
Saint Jude Parish Monday- Friday: 6pm Saturday: 7am Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am Parish office hours: Monday-Friday 9:30-11:30am, 3:30-5pm Office is close every Thursday and Saturday Telephone no. 288-0007			
San Antonio Parish Monday-Friday 6pm Saturday: 6pm Sunday: 7am, 9am (Blessing of children) Parish office hours: Tuesday-Saturday: 8-11:30am, 2-4:45pm Close on Sunday and Monday			
San Francisco de Borja-Rota Sunday: 6am Chamorro, 8am English Monday and Tuesday:6am Chamorro Wednesday:6pm English Thursday: 6am Chamorro Friday: 6am English Saturday: 6am Chamorro, 6pm Tagalog Sunday: anticipated mass			
San Isidro-Rota Sunday: 5am, 8am, 10am Monday-Friday: 7pm Saturday: 5am and 7pm			
San Jose (Oleai) Parish Monday- Saturday: 6am daily mass Monday- Sunday: 3pm Divine Mercy Chaplet Wednesday: 6pm, mass, exposition of the blessed sacrament Saturday: 6pm, anticipated Sunday mass Sunday: 7:30-9am English, 6pm Tagalog mass Office hours: Monday-Wednesday: 9am-12pm, 2-5pm Thursday: day off Friday- Saturday: 8am-12pm, 2-5pm Telephone no. 234-6991			
San Roque Parish Sunday: 7:30am Chamorro, 9am English Monday: 6pm English Tuesday: 6pm English Wednesday: 6pm English- novena mass to our Lady of San Roque oil Thursday: 6pm English Friday: 6pm English- Devotion to the sacred heart of Jesus (First Fridays) Saturday: 6am English- Our Lady's Saturday mass for the intentions of the			
Men and Women in military service, 6pm English- anticipated mass Parish office hours: daily except Thursday and Sundays: 4:30-6pm Telephone no. 322-2404, Fr. Bong's cell: 285-912, Diocesan Finance office: 234-3000 ext.143			
San Vicente Parish Monday-Friday: 6pm, Saturday: 6pm (First Saturday of every month) Sunday: 6am anticipated mass, 6pm (Neo Catechumenal community mass), 8pm Sunday: 6am, 9am, 6pm Parish office hours: daily 9-11am Telephone no. 235-8208 or 287-0131			
Santa Remedios Sunday: 8am Monday: 6pm (1 st Mondays cemetery masses at 5:30pm) Tuesday- Friday: 6pm Saturday: 6pm-anticipated Sunday mass 8-10pm Parish office hours: Monday- Friday: 8:30am-12pm			
PROTESTANT 			
Amen Church Sunday : 10am, 1pm, 5pm Wednesday : 7pm Friday Prayer : 9pm Bible Study : 4pm (Tue) Music Practice : 5pm (Sat) Korean class: 3:30pm (Thu) Visitation : 10am(Fri, Sat) Outreach : 8am (First Sat) Tel. No. 285-2121, 256-2221 Email : oseyo@daum.net			
Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am Sunday School for Children: 10-11am Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm			
Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan Sunday School: 9am Sunday Morning Worship: 10am Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm Telephone no. 234-6026/27			
Chinese Christian Church of Saipan Worship Services: Sunday: Chinese and Filipino 9am, English 6pm Bible Study: Wednesday and Saturday 8pm Telephone no. 235-8540			
Church 360 Suite 103 of Marianas Business Plaza (1st floor of former Nauru Building). Contact www.church360saipan.org, info@church360saipan.org, or call 888-2116 Celebration Service: Sundays at 10:15am Prayer Fellowship: Thursdays at 6:30pm			
Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan Morning Service, Sunday, 10:00 am Evening Service, Sunday, 6:00 pm Children Sunday School, 10:00am/ 6:00 pm Prayer Meeting, Wednesday, 7-9 pm Youth Night of Worship, Friday, 6:30 pm As Perdido Road Chalan Piao, Saipan MP 96950 Tel. No. (670) 235-8590 Email: cornerstone@cfemcares.org			
Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan St. Paul's Episcopal Church Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 10:00am Place: Garapan, Plumeria Road, Call 285-6081 for directions			
Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan Sunday Worship Service: 9-11am Sunday school/ Children's church 9am (nursery available during Sunday service) GBI Classes: 4-6pm Prayer Meeting: 6am Tuesday GCA Kagman, Wednesday Navy Hill, Thursday San Antonio			
Home Cell Bible Study: 7pm (Through out the week) Telephone no. 322-5680			
Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan Wednesday: 7:45pm (English) Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (Tagalog) Saturday: 7:45pm (Tagalog) Sunday: 6:45am (English) Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)			
Immanuel United Methodist Church Chalan Kanoa Drive, Chalan Kanoa (east of Town Center and Beach Road, Near Mt. Carmel Cathedral) Worship Service: 9:00am Children's Sunday School: 9:00am Choir Practice: 8:00am Singspiration: 8:30am Prayer, Care & Share: Wednesday 7:00pm Pastor: Millie Carroll 322-6158			
Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation) Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal 8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog) 9:15am-Sunday School Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group 8:00pm-Prayer Meeting Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church) Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage) (Korean Congregation) Sunday worship: 9am, 10:30, 1pm Wednesday evening service: 8pm Daily morning prayer: 5am			
Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan Sunday English Service: 7:30-9am, Sunday Tagalog Service: 9-11am and 6-8pm, Wednesday: 7:30-9pm			
Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan Sunday School: 9:20am Sunday Adult: 11am Sunday Evening: 7:30pm Wednesday: 8pm			
Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan Sunday Worship Service: 10am-12noon Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)			
Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan English Worship Service: 9-10:30am Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm English Sunday School: 11am-12pm Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm Wednesday Prayer Meeting: English, 7pm-8pm Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm			
Missions Connection Ministry Every Sunday Celebrations: 10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog) Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm Youth Impact Friday: 7pm Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm			
Northern Marianas Christian Church Sunday Worship Service: 10 am at Seventh Day Adventist church on Quartermaster Rd. Wednesday Service: 7 pm at Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 Contact Nick for more info: 287-1661			
Marianas Bible Fellowship Center Sunday School: 9-9:30am Divine Worship: 9:30-11am Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm			
Pentecostal Missionary Church of Christ (4th Watch) Sunday worship 8:30am Sunday evening 7:00pm Prayer meeting, every Wednesday 7:30pm			
San Jose village, after San Jose Hotel Telephone: 789-7566			
Saipan Christian Church Sunday: 7:30am-10am Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting) Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)			
Saipan Church of Christ Sunday Bible Class: 9am Sunday Worship: 10am Sunday Worship English: 10-11am Sunday Worship Tagalog: 6-7pm Thursday Bible Study: 7pm			
Saipan Community Church (Sunday Services) Palau Service: 7:30am-9am English Service: 10am-11:30am Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm			
Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan (Saturday Church Services) Sabbath School Program: 9-10am Lesson Study: 10-10:40am Divine Service: 11-12pm Visitation: 3-4pm Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm Sundown Worship: 6-7pm			
First Baptist Church Koblerville Sunday services: Sunday school 9:00am Morning worship 10:00am Evening service 6:00pm Wednesday evening bible study 7:00pm			
Chinese services Sunday morning 10:00am Sunday evening 7:00pm			
Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. Telephone No: 285-4661/2			
Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center Phone 234-0209 New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches. Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi			
Service Times Sunday 10:00am Worship Service Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service Saturday 10:00am Evangelism			
Upper Room International Ministries Sunday 5:30am-6:30am Morning prayer 7am-9am English service 7am-9am Sunday school 10am-12noon English service, Koblerville Wednesday 7pm-9pm Prayer meeting Saturday 7pm-9pm Tagalog service Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church Gualo Rai, Saipan			
Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church Sunday School: 9:30am Sunday AM Worship:10:30am Sunday PM Worship:7:00am Wed Worship: 7:30pm Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S			
Victorious Christian Church (Formerly God's Victorious Army) Sunday 8:30am to 10:30am - Worship Service Monday 7:00 pm - Women's Fellowship Tuesday nights - Home cellgroup Wednesday - 7:30pm to 9:00pm Mid Week Service Friday 7:30pm to 9:00pm Prayer Meeting Saturday nights - Praise and worship practice Last Friday of the month - Overnight praying meeting Pastor Brendon Perez - Tel# 2359246			
Editor's Note: Information subject to change without prior notice. All information provided by the respective churches. If you want your church or religious activities included or to report changes and errors, call <i>Saipan Tribune</i> at 235-6397 or 235-2440 or email editor@saipantribune.com.			

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Mar. 24, 1999

Instructional reforms come under review
The issue over eliminating time allotment for each subject versus imposing a required period each day was debated upon yesterday by school principals and teachers of the Public School System during the committee meeting for curriculum and assessment. Board of Education member Thomas Pangelinan presented to the participants a proposal for the primary grade that allots 170 minutes daily for language arts, 60 minutes for Math and 50 minutes for music, arts and physical education. The proposal was met with opposition where school officials emphasized the use of standards instead of focusing on the time requirement for each subject.

Trade-zone bill gets rush action
A legislation establishing the first ever free trade zone in the Northern Marianas heads to a joint House committee for review, including comments and inputs from the business sector, before lawmakers consider the proposal on the floorHouse Speaker Diego T. Benavente, who sponsors the administration-backed measure, tossed it yesterday to the committees on Commerce and Tourism as well as Ways and Means for further deliberation. “Because not only that is there going to be a creation of a commission under the free trade zone bill, but there’s also an accompanying legislation that is going to be required to accommodate the free trade zone intentions, such as exemptions from certain taxes,” he said in an interview.

Mar. 24, 2000

SGMA supports NMC radio station
The Saipan Garment Manufacturers Association this week presented a check for \$1,000 to help KRNM 88.1 FM, the public radio station located on the campus of Northern Marianas College, to bring programming to the community. Karl Pogue, general manager of KRNM stated that, “Local donations such as this are crucial to our station, as we receive no federal funding for our operations. The donation from SGMA will be used to underwrite four programs for a full year, including the locally-produced ‘China Tonight’ show and the syndicated programs, ‘CyberMedia,’ ‘Car Talk,’ and ‘EchoesEchoes.’”

OFWs urged to file ITRs early
Exempted or not, Filipino workers in the Northern Marianas must file their income tax returns to the Philippine Consulate before the deadline on April 15 to avoid penalty. The Consulate will intensify its campaign to encourage Filipino workers here to submit their ITRs even those who are exempt from paying income taxes to the Philippine government. Income tax forms are now available at the Consular Office. However, overseas Filipino workers on Tinian and on Rota will be allowed extension in the filing of their income taxes by as late as the first two weeks of May, or when the Consulate conducts consular mission on the islands.

Mar. 24, 2003

Joint session sought on Kan Pacific lease
The House is keen on meeting with the Senate in a joint session this week to decide on Kan Pacific Saipan Ltd.’s request for a 15-year lease extension, amid the nearing expiration of the firm’s 25-year lease contract this April. Natural Resources Committee Chairman Rep. Arnold I. Palacios said Friday that House members are ready to decide on the lease extension request. The joint session was tentatively proposed for today, March 25, but the House was still awaiting the Senate’s nod as of Friday last week.

‘NMI entitled to \$20K in Cardizem settlement’
House U.S. and Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Rep. William S. Torres is planning to round up insurance firms, healthcare providers and other local agencies to begin assessing reimbursements entitled to CNMI consumers who purchased the high blood pressure drug Cardizem CD between July 1, 1998 and Jan. 29, 2003. Torres is initiating the meeting after learning that the CNMI is entitled to some \$20,000 out of the \$7-million settlement in the case against pharmaceutical companies Aventis and Andrx--charged with conspiring to keep the generic version of Cardizem CD off the market for one year. Assistant attorney general Brian R. Caldwell informed the Saipan congressman that, although it is too late for the CNMI to join as a named plaintiff to the generic drug case settlement, the Northern Marianas is entitled to a \$20,000 exclusive award out of the \$7-million settlement.

Maharlika

PH consul general mulls honorary consuls for each island

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Consul General Medardo Macaraig is considering having one honorary consul for each island in the Commonwealth after the Philippine Consulate General shuts down in October.

Macaraig said yesterday that he discussed this possibil-

ity when he met with Filipino community leaders at the Filipino Workers Resource Center last Friday.

He said having one honorary consul each for Saipan, Tinian, and Rota would be ideal instead of just having one based on



Macaraig

who would have to travel to Tinian and Rota to deal with issues affecting the Filipino communities in those two islands.

"I asked for assistance from the Filipino community leaders last Friday to iden-

tify potential honorary consuls since nobody has stepped up to the plate yet," Macaraig told *Saipan Tribune*.

Macaraig noted that the honorary consuls for the three islands, if ever, will be reporting directly to the Philippine Consulate General in Guam.

The Consul General disclosed that he himself already

has four individuals in mind as candidates for the honorary consul position. While he declined to identify their names, Macaraig said he has yet to talk to only one person whom he believes is the most deserving given that the person is capable, well-respected, approachable, and easy to talk to.

"I hope we can already iden-

tify at least one honorary consul before the Consulate closes down and before the scheduled visit of the representative of the Philippine Consulate General office in Guam in October," added Macaraig.

The last day for the Philippine Consulate General on Saipan to serve the public is on Oct. 31.

Lions Club hosts free health fair tomorrow

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

Members of the Lions Club International District 204 Region 2 will be hosting a health fair on Sunday, March 25, at the Civic Center in Susupe from 8am to noon.

Region 2 is composed of the Saipan Fil-Am Lions Club,

Saipan Marianas Lions Club, and Saipan Unity Lions Club. They will be providing free services at the event: eye checkup and eyeglasses, blood pressure and blood sugar screenings, consultative medical information, and other medical services.

Health fair committee's Paul Madriaga on Thursday said the local health providers that will

take part in the health fair include the Saipan Seventh-Day Adventist Clinic, the Northern Marianas College Nursing Club, Hardt Eye Clinic, volunteers from the Commonwealth Health Center, and Dr. Esther Kanayjorn.

Madriaga said they are expecting Guam Lions to arrive and assist during the event.

Among them are Guam Asia Pacific Lions Club district governor Rey Acierto, district treasurer Tony Soriano, Guam Galaide Lions Club district administrator Zeny Cachila, Guam Marianas Lions Club officers led by president Joe Besagar and past district governor Celso Gianchand, and other past district governors and officers.

Visiting Lions from Guam will be providing hearing and eye test-

ing equipment and technicians, prescription glasses, and cancer awareness brochures.

Madriaga also said that anti-flu shots will be administered at the event by the Public Health immunization program.

Non-profit organizations Nurturing Transformative & Sustainable Communities or NUTESE led by Keiko Odashiro and the CNMI Diabetes Coalition headed by John Gonzales will also set up booths at the

health fair.

Donations for used/old eyeglasses to be refurbished will also be accepted for distribution, added Madriaga.

Madriaga and Lion Olive Yana urged the public to take advantage of Sunday's health fair.

"Bring your friends and take advantage of this rare medical opportunity. Medical practitioners from Guam and Saipan will be happy to serve all of you for free," added Yana.



GOODWILL VISIT

Two members of the Philippine Coast Guard watch as U.S. navy ship USS *Blue Ridge* docks at Manila's South Harbor, Philippines, Friday, March 23, 2012. The *Blue Ridge*, flagship of the United States Seventh Fleet, was on a routine port call and on a four-day goodwill visit in the country.

AP/PAT ROQUE

Medical mission draws greater turnout

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

The medical mission hosted by the Pentecostal Missionary Church of Christ 4th Watch in Dandan on March 18 had a "greater" turnout compared to the crowd during last month's event.

Pastor Claire Javillonar said they served a total of 94 individuals, 21 of whom were locals. Majority of those who availed of the free services during the

medical mission held at the Hi-Mart store parking lot were Filipinos, she added.

"Surprisingly, this is our operation where we had a lot of locals who joined," said Javillonar. "They read the announcements that we published in the newspapers. Usually, it's Filipinos who avail of our free services."

The services provided at the event were blood sugar and blood pressure screenings, eye checkup, facial and body massage, haircut, and spiritual counseling.

Among their volunteers were four nursing graduates of Loyola University, a nurse from the Commonwealth Health Center, Rhea of Tropical Blend Spa and Salon, and their church members.

"Thank you to all Dandan Village residents for their warm welcome and participation and for appreciating our endeavor, especially to the owner of Hi-Mart store," said Javillonar.

Javillonar disclosed that their next venue for the village-to-

village medical mission is either As Lito or Susupe.

"We're trying to visit those villages that we haven't visited yet," she added.

POLO PHONE NUMBERS

The Philippine Overseas Labor Office's telephone number (670) 235-6992 has already been disconnected, effective March 21, 2012. All concerned are requested to call the POLO hotline at (670) 235 3411. Fax number 235-3412 remains as is. (POLO)

Consulate, Century Travel tie up for Philippine tour

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

The Philippine Consulate General on Saipan has inked a partnership with Century Travel for the 7th Ambassadors, Consuls General and Tourism Directors Tour of the Philippines, slated for July 11 to 15.

Consul General Medardo Macaraig said yesterday that Century Travel will be their official partner in promoting the group tour by arranging for the flight and hotel bookings of participants from Saipan.

A flagship tourism project of Philippine embassies and consulates in the United States and Canada, the ACGTD tour was conceptualized in 2004 to lure *balikbayans*, Americans, and Canadians to the country every summer or around July in North America.

The basic tour cost is from \$1,300 on double occupancy, inclusive of fuel tax and surcharges. It will be highlighted by a visit to the Malacañang Palace, the Philippines' seat of government, with a meeting and photo opportunity with President Benigno S. Aquino III.

Besides the Malacañang visit, participants will also enjoy hotel accommodations with free breakfast at Dusit Hotel in Makati City, dinners with cultural show and entertainment, a wreath-laying ceremony at Rizal Park, a day trip to the Las Casas de Acuzar in Bataan, and other choices of special tours and immersion programs.

Exciting and optional post tours to other beautiful sites in the country such as Cebu and Bohol, Aklan and Boracay, Puerto Princesa in Palawan, Bi-

col, Davao, Laoag and Vigan, and Iloilo and Bacolod, are also available after the basic tour.

Macaraig said that Cesar Lopez of Century Travel, "one of the biggest, trusted and respected travel agencies" in the CNMI, is in charge of the basic tour reservations.

The Consul General said he has already introduced Lopez to Rajah Tours Philippines, the Manila travel agency that will be handling the Manila side of the tour, including the post-tours.

"This would be one of our last projects at the Consulate before we officially close down to the Filipino community in the Commonwealth by October," Macaraig told *Saipan Tribune*.

Lopez, in a separate interview, said Century Travel and the Consulate started making arrangements for the tour since February, having negotiated with United Airlines, parent company of Continental Airlines, for great deals and rates for the tour.

"We're able to negotiate a lower price for the tickets considering that July is a peak season. We were given the group support fare for this tour," said Lopez.

According to Lopez, they are looking at having at least 10 individuals who will take advantage of this opportunity to travel on cheaper air fares, stay in a fantastic hotel, and get to know more about the Philippines.

Both Lopez and Macaraig encouraged dignitaries, executives, immigrants, and Filipino workers to take part in the ACGTD tour in July.

For more information, call Lopez at 235-3708 or the Consulate at 234-1849.

AP Enterprise: Philippines using US smart bombs

By JIM GOMEZ
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Concealed by the night sky, the two aging Philippine air force planes unleashed a surprise high-tech weapon: U.S. satellite-guided bombs that whizzed down with deadly precision toward a long-elusive terrorist suspect and two other top radicals dozing with their men in Jolo Island's jungle.

The use of smart bombs, confirmed to The Associated Press by four senior Philippine security officials, marks a new chapter in the long-running battle against an al-Qaida-linked movement in the southern Philippines, viewed by the U.S. as a key front in the global effort to keep terrorists at bay.

Successive blasts shattered a hillside rebel encampment of Abu Sayyaf, which remains one of Southeast Asia's most violent groups despite a decade of battle losses. The Vietnam War-era turboprops roared away after delivering a bull's-eye hit near mountainous Parang town around 3 a.m. on Feb. 2.

Thermal imaging from a U.S. drone, described by two of the senior officials, depicted the aftermath: Several slain gunmen lay amid a clutter of destroyed trees, huts and tents, while survivors pulled away the dead and wounded in the pitch darkness.

Although it remains unclear whether all three of the most-wanted terrorists were killed, the introduction of smart bombs reflects shifting battlefields and strategies.

The U.S. has been assisting the Philippine military since shortly after the Sept. 11 attacks, providing advice, training, and intelligence, including drone surveillance, but the smart bombs are the first major high-tech hardware supplied to the Philippines.

They offer a less manpower-intensive way to combat Abu Sayyaf at a time when both the Philippines and the U.S. militaries want to focus resources on tensions with China in the South China Sea. They also dovetail with a change in recent years from massive offensives to surgical, intelligence-



In this Feb. 2, 2012 file photo, Philippine National Police Special Action Forces and SOCO (Scene of the Crime Operatives) investigators examine the site on the island province of Jolo in southern Philippines where three most wanted leaders of the al-Qaida-linked terrorist groups Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah were killed in a U.S.-backed dawn airstrike in Jolo, Philippines.

driven strikes that target holdouts of the battered Abu Sayyaf.

The four senior officials said the strike on the Abu Sayyaf lair employed GPS-guided bombs, a previously unavailable technology acquired from the United States under a confidential military assistance project. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they aren't authorized to discuss those details with the media.

A Philippine military document detailing the project, a copy of which was seen by the AP, said that U.S. defense contractor Raytheon Co. was to deliver 22 kits last year to convert conventional bombs into precision-guided munitions that could be launched from the OV-10 turboprop. Accompanying that was crew training, equipment upgrades to allow the OV-10s to deploy the bombs and two test runs.

A military spokesman, Col. Arnulfo Marcelo Burgos, said the Armed Forces of the Philippines "neither confirms nor denies the existence of such munitions citing operational security reasons.

However, its pilots have been training vigorously to further improve their proficiency particularly in the precise delivery of munitions to its identified target."

Many Western, Middle Eastern and Asian countries have acquired smart bombs since they were first widely used by the U.S.-led coalition in the 1990-91 Gulf War. They have guidance kits and fins and use the U.S. GPS satellite system, laser and other technologies to zero in on targets.

Philippine Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin praised "the carefully planned precision attack" in a statement days after the strike. The well-planned assault, he said, avoided the military casualties often incurred in ground raids.

Gazmin would not respond to questions about the new bombs in an interview with The AP last week, but he said that technology from the Americans has given the military lifesaving skills such as enabling pilots to fly at night. Training with U.S. forces has focused on ways to avoid harming noncombatants and wasting resources,

he said, citing last month's airstrike.

"We were able to trace that they were all together at a certain time so that was the time to hit," Gazmin said. "So we took off early morning and bombed them, delivering four bombs. We were successful."

The Philippine military announced that a top Malaysian terrorist suspect, Zulkifli bin Hir, also known as Marwan, was among the dead, along with Singaporean martial arts instructor Muhamda Ali—whose rebel name is Muawiyah—and Abu Sayyaf commander Gumbahali Umbra Jumdail.

But doubts have arisen about the fates of the two foreign terrorists, and two government reports seen by the AP contend that Marwan and Muawiyah survived the airstrike with minor wounds after they heard the buzz of the OV-10s and fled.

Between nine to 15 militants were killed in the barrage but others quickly dragged away the dead, making it difficult to confirm who was killed, according to military officials.

Marwan is on the FBI list of most-wanted terrorists and has a \$5 million bounty on his head. Jumdail had been a key target because he sheltered foreign radicals such as Marwan and Muawiyah and has been blamed for deadly bombings and kidnappings.

The military presumes they are dead until an investigation shows otherwise, spokesman Burgos said, though he added that huge cash rewards for informants who helped find the militants have been put on hold.

The airstrike shook the militants, according to the government reports. The precision of the attack, and that it came in the dark, told them that they were being targeted by more advanced technology. It also indicated there were government spies in their ranks and reinforced fears that harboring foreign fugitives would make them magnets for attack.

"They have become very wary of things and equipment that are being brought into their camp, suspecting these were laden with beacons that can be used to track them," Gazmin said.

Marwan and Muawiyah were lying low with gunmen in a Jolo mountain stronghold, the government reports said, but the Abu Sayyaf commander in the area, Radulan Sahiron, ordered them out.

Sahiron, who is in his 70s and the group's most senior commander, has long been wary of outsiders—unlike Jumdail, who also had been treating ill villagers as a quack doctor, providing a window for government surveillance.

The Abu Sayyaf—or Bearer of the Sword—was founded in 1991 on southern Basilan Island. With an unwieldy collective of preachers and outlaws, it vowed to wage jihad, or holy war, but lost its key leaders early in combat, sending it on a violent path of extremism and criminality.

Today, it has degenerated into a few loose factions with 381 ragtag fighters and no central leader. But the group remains resilient and is more violent, a military assessment said, citing 74 atrocities committed last year, including 17 kidnappings, 16 bombings and 14 killings and ambushes—far more than each of the five previous years.

PH govt lifts OFW ban in Libya, Nigeria, South Sudan

By PHILIP C. TUBEZA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

The government has lifted the ban on the deployment of overseas Filipino workers to Nigeria, Libya and South Sudan.

Labor Secretary Rosalinda Baldoz said Thursday that the governing board of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) issued three separate resolutions lifting the ban on deployment to the three African countries.

Baldoz cited POEA records that showed there are 2,152 Filipino migrant workers in Libya; 1,691 in Nigeria, and 1,941 in Sudan.

Baldoz said the POEA lifted the ban for Nigeria after the Department of Foreign Affairs earlier this month gave the green light due to the improved security situation in that country.

The ban on deployment of migrants to Nigeria was imposed on Jan. 22, 2007 due to the rise of kidnappings and unrest in that country.

The ban was partially lifted in March 2007, allowing migrants vacationing in the Philippines to go back to their jobs.

But the ban was reimposed in January 2008 and was expanded to cover Filipino seafarers.

Baldoz said the ban for Libya was lifted after the Office of the President approved the recommendation of the Department of Foreign Affairs to lower the crisis alert level in that northern African country.

Manila barred migrants from going to Libya in February 2011 after the civil war that eventually toppled the regime of Moammar Gadhafi broke out.

The POEA partially lifted the ban in December and allowed only migrant workers with existing contracts in the oil and medical sectors to return to Libya.

"The gradual processing is no longer in effect as the governing board now allows the resumption of the processing and deployment of Filipino workers to Libya," Baldoz said.

The POEA board also lifted the ban on deployment to South Sudan, as the political and security situation in that country had improved.

The POEA imposed a total ban two months ago due to worsening political and security situation there.

Retired Arroyo general denies recruiting soldiers for coup

By DJ YAP
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

One of the retired generals closely identified with the Arroyo administration on Thursday dispelled rumors he was behind the recruitment of active military personnel for a coup to be launched against the Aquino administration.

"I am not recruiting or asking others to recruit for me," said former Armed Forces of the Philippines chief Hermogenes Esperon in an interview at Fort Bonifacio on the sidelines of the 115th anniversary celebration of the Philippine Army which he once headed as commanding general.

"I don't know about reports linking

me [to coup plots] but this much I can say: First of all, let's take a look at whoever is saying that. Because I have noticed that whoever are saying a coup will happen are those who were involved in coups in the past," Esperon said.

He said that, on the contrary, he was one of those in the military organization "who had been fighting attempts to destabilize the government since 1987."

"I even became the commander of the counterintelligence unit of the Army in 1990 and 1991 and that was the force that was going after the coup plotters," Esperon said.

"When I became chief of staff, or even as army commander, I truly disliked any action taken outside of the

chain of command and those who would air their grievances when such a mechanism existed," he said.

Esperon said he had no reason to want to topple the Aquino administration.

"Why would I do that? Let us learn from the lessons of the past. Those who were courted in the active service by coup plotters were those whose careers were ruined," he said.

"What I can only say is let us not destroy the armed forces by way of besmirching the retirees. It's like they're saying the armed forces is evil because it breeds coup plotters. Let us aim for an armed forces that is strong and credible," he said.

Philippine police rescue kidnapped health worker

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Police in the Philippines say officers and civilian volunteers backed by marines have rescued a health worker abducted by militants on a southern island.

Sulu provincial police chief Antonio Freyra says midwife Rosalyn Kiram was abandoned Wednesday

by Abu Sayyaf gunmen in Jolo Island's Patikul township after troops closed in on the kidnappers two days after her abduction. She appeared unharmed but shaken.

The al-Qaida-linked militants are holding five foreigners for ransom, including an Australian and two Eu-

ropeans.

Army Col. Daniel Lucero says a criminal gang suspected of kidnapping two teachers in Iligan city on the main southern island of Mindanao Tuesday is demanding a \$94,000 ransom. He says he opposes ransom payments to discourage future kidnappings.

Samut-Sari



TREE PLANTING Over 40 Tan Holdings executives and unit managers led by president and chief operating officer Jerry Tan pose for a photo before the start of the tree planting initiative in celebration of the company's 40th anniversary last Tuesday. The group planted 100 flame tree saplings along Beach Road starting across from the Morgen Building up to the Civic Center in Susupe. CLARISSA V. DAVID



Executives and business unit managers of Tan Holdings wait for the start of the tree planting event along Beach Road last March 20. CLARISSA V. DAVID



Tan Holdings corporate consultant David M. Sablan, second right, and Tan Siu Lin Foundation manager Ed Arriola, right, hand the \$500 donation to Mariana Islands Nature Alliance board chair Herminia Fusco, second left, and executive director Sam Sablan, left, during the tree planting event on Tuesday. CLARISSA V. DAVID



BANK OF GUAM DONATION Bank of Guam provides a \$3,000 donation to the Red Cross Walkathon. Marcie Tomokane, third from left, vice president of Bank of Guam, presents a check to Jocelyn Deleon Guerrero, second from left, co-chair of the 2012 Walkathon. "Bank of Guam has a long history of supporting our event," said Deleon Guerrero. "Not only do they provide generous financial support but their staff volunteers during the event to help with accounting of all the donations." From left, James Matsumoto, assistant vice president/credit officer, Bank of Guam; Deleon Guerrero, Tomokane, John Hirsh, JD Tenorio, and Kennedy Benjamin. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



BANK OF HAWAII DONATION Bank of Hawaii senior vice president John Sheather, second from right, and assistant vice president Lisa San Nicholas, right, present a \$2,500 donation to support the American Red Cross Walkathon. "Bank of Hawaii has always been one of our major donors," said John Hirsh, second from left, executive director of the NMI Chapter. "In addition to their financial support, they always involve their employees as walkers and provide support through an aid station along the route." At left is JD Tenorio, ARC Emergency Services director. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT David S. Hurst, deputy chief accreditation officer of U.S. Regional and State Office Services, discusses NCA's Advanced standards to principals, programs managers, education officials, and members of the Board of Education during a workshop at Pacific Islands Club Saipan Wednesday morning. MONETH G. DEPOSA

Business

Unhappy public not sure who to blame for high gas

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Families canceling vacations. Fishermen watching their profits burn up along with their boats' gasoline. Drivers buying only a few gallons of gas at a time because they can't afford to fill the tank.

From all corners of the country, Americans are irritated these days by record-high fuel prices that have soared above \$4 a gallon in some states and could top \$5 by summer. And the cost is becoming a political issue just as the presidential campaign kicks into high gear.

Some blame President Barack Obama. Some just cite "the government," while others believe it's the work of big, greedy oil companies. No matter who is responsible, almost everyone seems to want the government to do something, even if people aren't sure what, exactly, it should or can do.

A Gallup poll this month found 85 percent of U.S. adults believe the president and Congress "should take immediate actions to try to control the rising price of gas." An Associated Press-GfK poll last month showed 71 percent believe gas prices are a "very" or "extremely" important matter.

Chris Kaufman, who spends \$120 a week on gas to travel the 60 miles between his two jobs, at the University of South Dakota in Sioux Falls and at a hotel in Vermillion, S.D., blames the price spike on threats from Iran to cut off oil shipments through the Strait of Hormuz.

"I think the candidates running for president need to take a good hard look at that and determine what their foreign policy is going to be for countries that threaten to do that," he said. "It's going to affect every single citizen in the United States."

Still, he believes the president has little control over gas prices, adding that it is commodities traders who really dictate prices.

Trucker Cory Nissen of Ruther Glen, Va., agrees.

"The president is nothing but a fall guy," Nissen said as he took a break from his rig at a stop in Wilton, N.Y., earlier this week.

Nissen, who is paid by the mile, said he has seen his paychecks shrink because his employer has cut back delivery runs in reaction to the rising cost of fuel. "It needs to change and change quick," he said. "I got bills I got to pay, and half the time I can't pay them."

On the presidential campaign trail, Mitt Romney called on Obama last weekend to fire his energy secretary, interior secretary and Environmental Protection Agency administrator, dubbing them "the gas-hike trio." Fellow Republican Newt Gingrich promised to roll the price of gas back to \$2.50 a gallon if he's elected.

Obama mocked Gingrich's promise, saying, "They start acting like they've got a magic wand and will give you cheap gas forever if you elect us."

Amy Lis of Buffalo, N.Y., and her boyfriend canceled their vacation to Florida this spring in favor of a three-hour drive to Cleveland for an overnight stay and a visit to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Even that trip will cost more than \$100 in gas.

"It's more than our hotel," she said as she filled up her boyfriend's Ford Ranger pickup.

In truth, there is not a lot the president and Congress can do in the short term to push down gasoline prices. They are tied to oil prices, which have climbed in recent months, pushed by increased consumption from developing nations in Asia, Latin America and the Middle East and by concerns about supply disruptions in Iran and elsewhere.

Mike Siroub, who has operated a Union Oil station in the Los Angeles suburb of Arcadia for 25 years, said customers who used to fill up their tanks now put in just \$10 or \$20 at a time, telling him that that's all they can afford and that they are driving less or using more fuel-efficient cars.

He himself has joined them.

"I used to have a car with a big V-8 engine," he said. "I traded it for a four-cylinder Toyota Camry."

Among the things the government can do to bring relief to drivers is reduce gasoline taxes or push to get more fuel-efficient cars on the road. The first new fuel standards since 1990 are just now going into effect, and the U.S. auto fleet is more efficient than ever.

People are still feeling the pain.

Insurers speed health care overhaul preparations

By TOM MURPHY
AP BUSINESS WRITER

The nation's big insurers are spending millions to carry out President Barack Obama's health care overhaul even though there's a chance the wide-reaching law won't survive Supreme Court scrutiny.

It's not that health insurers want to bet big that the court will uphold the Affordable Care Act. It's that they can't afford not to. It will take at least several months and lots of resources for insurers to prepare to implement key elements of the law, which includes a controversial requirement that most Americans have health insurance by 2014.

WellPoint Inc., the nation's second-largest health insurer with 34 million members, has said it will spend \$100 million this year on technology upgrades to meet the law's requirements. Aetna Inc., third-largest U.S. health insurer with more than 18 million members, says it expects to spend \$50 million this year in part to upgrade software and computers.

Even smaller insurers like Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, a private company with 4 million members, are spending big. This year, the company, which employs 7,000 people, plans to add about 100 employees and spend nearly \$20 million.

The law calls for big changes in the number of people receiving coverage, what must be covered and who pays for it, so insurers that don't prepare until after the court's ruling, expected in late June, will run short on time, said Kirk Roy, vice president of national health reform with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan.

"Waiting is too big a business risk for any insurer," said Roy, who was promoted to his current job shortly after the overhaul became law in 2010.

The Supreme Court will hear arguments over the law for three days starting Monday. Among other options, the justices could uphold the law, strike it down completely or get rid of some provisions.



Rosalyn Buchanan fills her tank with gas at a station in Arcadia, Calif., Tuesday, March 20, 2012. From all corners of the country, Americans are poorer and angrier these days, thanks to the record fuel prices that have soared above \$4 a gallon in some states and could top \$5 by summer.

Bernanke: Economy lacks strength to sustain gains

WASHINGTON (AP)—There is still not enough spending and investment to sustain the economic recovery, Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke said Thursday.

Bernanke said consumer demand remains weak relative to its level before the Great Recession. He noted that other contributors to economic growth—including borrowing and trade—have declined.

"Consumer spending has not ... recovered. It's still quite weak relative to where it was before the crisis," Bernanke said in the second of four lectures he is giving to George Washington University students this month. "We lack a source of demand to keep the economy growing."

His comments provided further insight into the reasoning behind the Fed's plan to hold short-term interest rates near zero through 2014. The central bank has stuck with that timetable despite three months of strong job growth and other signs of economic improvement.

Many economists believe that Fed officials will not make any changes in policy at their next meeting on April 25-26 and will only ease credit conditions if the economy slows further.

Applications for unemployment benefits fell last week to a four-year low, providing more support to the view that the job market is strengthening. From December through February, employers have added an average of 245,000 jobs per month, the best three months of hiring in two years.

But incomes are still barely keeping up with inflation and people are having to cope with a big jump in gas prices.

In his lecture Thursday, Bernanke covered the Fed's history from the end of World War II through the housing boom of the last decade. The boom followed by a collapse in housing that contributed to a financial crisis and deep recession.

NEW YORK (AP)—Supermarket chains Kroger Co. and Stop & Shop said Thursday they will join the growing list of store chains that will no longer sell beef that includes an additive with the unappetizing moniker "pink slime."

Federal regulators say the ammonia-treated filler, known in the industry as "lean, finely textured beef," meets food safety standards. But critics say the product could be unsafe and is an unappetizing example of industrialized food production.

The Kroger Co., the nation's largest traditional grocer with 2,435 supermarkets in 31 states, also said it will stop buying the beef, reversing itself after saying Wednesday that it would sell beef both with and without the additive.

Earlier Thursday, Stop & Shop said that while the U.S. Department of Agriculture has said the product is safe for consumption, it will stop selling the beef due to customer concerns. Stop & Shop is a unit of Dutch supermarkets owner Royal Ahold NV and operates 400 stores in the Northeast U.S.

The chains joined Safeway, Supervalu and Food Lion, among others, who have said they won't sell beef with the filler.

"Our customers have expressed their concerns that the use of lean finely textured beef—while fully approved by the USDA for safety and quality—is something they do not want in their ground beef," Kroger said in a statement. "As a result, Kroger will no longer purchase ground beef containing lean finely textured beef."

The low-cost ingredient is made from fatty bits of meat left over from other cuts. The bits are heated to about 100 degrees Fahrenheit and spun to remove most of the fat. The lean mix then is compressed into blocks for use in ground meat. The product is exposed to ammonium hydroxide gas to kill bacteria, such as E. coli and salmonella.

STOCK
PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW 13,046.14 -78.48 -0.60%	S&P 1,392.78 -10.11 -0.72%	NASDAQ 3,063.32 -12.00 -0.39%
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EXCHANGE RATES

Australian Dollar	0.9624	Hong Kong Dollar	7.7668	Philippine Peso	43.04
British Pound	0.6322	Indian Rupee	51.2175	Singapore Dollar	1.2634
Canadian Dollar	1.0001	Indonesian Rupiah	9208.75	South Korean Won	1133.35
Chinese Yuan	6.3031	Japanese Yen	82.7592	Swiss Franc	0.913
Euro	0.7574	Malaysian Ringgit	3.08	Taiwan Dollar	29.5602
		New Zealand Dollar	1.2334	Thailand Baht	30.78

Nation

Santorum: Might as well have Obama over Romney

SAN ANTONIO (AP)—Presidential candidate Rick Santorum on Thursday said Republicans should give President Barack Obama another term if Santorum isn't the GOP nominee and for a second day compared rival Mitt Romney to an Etch A Sketch toy.

Santorum reiterated an argument he has made before: The former Massachusetts governor is not conservative enough to offer voters a clear choice in the fall election and that only he can provide that contrast.

"You win by giving people a choice," Santorum said during a campaign stop in Texas. "You win by giving people the opportunity to see a different vision for our country, not someone who's just going to be a little different than the person in there."

Santorum added: "If they're going to be a little different, we might as well stay with what we have instead of taking a risk of what may be the Etch A Sketch candidate for the future."

Santorum was referencing



AP
Republican presidential candidate, former Pennsylvania Sen. Rick Santorum speaks to USAA employees during a campaign stop at USAA, Thursday, March 22, 2012, in San Antonio.

Romney adviser Eric Fehrnstrom's comment Wednesday that "everything changes" for the fall campaign. "It's almost like an Etch A Sketch," he said on CNN. "You can kind of shake it up and we start all over again."

The remark reignited criticism of Romney as the type of

politician who will say or do anything to win.

Romney, who made no public appearances Thursday, issued a statement expressing disappointment "that Rick Santorum would rather have Barack Obama as president than a Republican."

"This election is more im-

portant than any one person. It is about the future of America," he said. "Any of the Republicans running would be better than President Obama and his record of failure."

Rival Newt Gingrich tweeted: "Rick Santorum is dead wrong. Any GOP nominee will be better than Obama."

During his speech to employees of USAA, a San Antonio-based insurance and financial services firm, Santorum briefly held up an Etch A Sketch and said his positions don't change like etchings on the toy, which are erased with a shake. He could be seen fiddling with the toy's knobs in the intervals between questions from audience members.

Addressing reporters afterward, Santorum lit into Romney for saying "I'm going to run as a conservative."

"He didn't say 'I am a conservative.' He said 'I'm going to run as a conservative.' So what do you do, you just sort of decide what you're going to be for the elections?" Santorum asked. "No one can accuse me of that. People say, 'Well, you can't win because of that.' No, I will win because of it."

Santorum said his brand of political authenticity will play well in Texas because "people are looking for someone who is real, someone they can relate

to, not someone who can get in front of an audience and say whatever they want."

The Texas primary has been pushed to May 29 because of litigation over redistricting maps drawn by the Republican-dominated state Legislature. Santorum said he expects to win Saturday's primary in Louisiana and added, "The race will not be over when Texas comes around."

"You'll have the opportunity here, in the state of Texas, to speak very loudly about what kind of leader you want in this country," he said.

Santorum said he speaks with Texas Gov. Rick Perry before scheduled campaign stops in the state. Perry sought the GOP nomination but left the race in January and endorsed former House Speaker Newt Gingrich.

"This is an important state for us," Santorum said. "I've already spent a lot of time, I've already done a lot of campaign events in Texas. More than anybody else, I suspect."

Bales to be charged with murder in Afghan killings

WASHINGTON (AP)—Army Staff Sgt. Robert Bales will be charged with 17 counts of murder, assault and a string of other offenses in the massacre of Afghan villagers as they slept, a U.S. official said.

The charges signed against Bales include 17 counts of murder, six counts of attempted murder and six counts of aggravated assault as well as dereliction of duty and other violations of military law, the official said on condition of anonymity because the charges had not been announced.

The 38-year-old soldier and father of two who lives in Lake

Tapps, Wash., will be charged with going on a shooting rampage in two villages near his Southern Afghanistan military post in the early hours of March 11, gunning down nine Afghan children and eight adults and burning some of the victims' bodies.

The charges are to be read to Bales on Friday. He is being held in a military prison at Fort Leavenworth in Kansas and faces trial under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

The killings were yet another blow to U.S.-Afghan relations, following a series of missteps, including the accidental burning

of Qurans, which prompted violent protests and revenge killings American troops in the war zone.

The brutal shooting rampage also prompted renewed debate in the United States about health care for the troops, who have experienced record suicide rates and high rates of post-traumatic stress and brain injuries

during repeated deployments over a decade of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Bales was on his fourth tour of duty, having served three tours in Iraq, where he suffered a head injury and a foot injury.

Bales' civilian attorney, John Henry Browne, has portrayed his client as a patriot, loving fa-

ther and devoted husband who had been traumatized by a comrade's injury and sent into combat one too many times.

"I'm not putting the war on trial," Browne has said, "but the war is on trial." He added: "If I can help create a discussion about the war, that would be a great way for me to go out."

Army officials have said Bales was cleared for return to duty after his head injury.

Bales joined the Army in 2001 after a Florida investment business failed and after he had worked with a string of securities operations. Bales and a broker at one company were hit in 2003 with a \$1.5 million arbitration ruling after an elderly couple charged that their holdings were decimated.

Feds consider closing some courtrooms

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP)—The federal government is considering closing dozens of courtrooms, many of which are located in small, rural communities, as part of an effort to cut costs.

Documents obtained by The Associated Press show 60 federal court facilities in 29 states could be on the chopping block. Most of the courtrooms are in buildings that house other federal agencies including post offices and many are located in remote areas. Critics say closing them could make it more difficult for people to get to court proceedings.

Six of the 60 court sites that could be closed are located in Arkansas. Texas and Georgia each have five sites on the list of possible closures. Officials are even considering shuttering the location where judges hold federal court in Alaska's capital city, Juneau.

There are 674 federal courthouses and facilities around the country, according to David Sellers, a federal courts spokesman. The 60 sites being considered for closure do not have a resident judge. Instead, judges based in larger cities

travel to these smaller locations as needed.

In the documents obtained by the AP, the court facilities that could close were ranked based on a variety of categories including cost, usage and location. Of the 10 facilities that seem most likely to be eyed for closure, two are in Arkansas, two are in South Carolina, and the rest are spread out between West Virginia, North Carolina, Mississippi, Virginia, Georgia and Maryland. A facility in Beaufort, S.C., tops the list, followed by the federal court site in Parkersburg, W.V. and one in Harrison, Ark.

The court sites are not the only targets that the federal government is taking aim at in rural parts of the country. As pressure mounts to trim spending, the government has considered closing post offices and eliminating federal subsidies for carriers that serve airports in rural communities and small towns.

"The federal judiciary is going through an aggressive cost containment effort because the money Congress has provided for the operating expenses for

the courts has been essentially frozen the last three years," Sellers said in an email. He said a significant portion of those funds are used to pay rent for federal court facilities.

The practice of reviewing court facilities that don't have a resident judge goes back to 1997, Sellers said.

A committee of the Judicial Conference of the United States, a policy-making body for the federal courts, sent the latest list to the 13 circuit judicial councils for review in February, Sellers said. They're supposed to get back to the committee by mid-April.

The committee will then review the recommendations and forward its report to the Judicial Conference, which could decide whether to close any of the court sites at its September meeting, Sellers said.

Documents obtained by the AP show that annual operating costs and rent for the 60 facilities total more than \$16 million each year, but other costs were not known. Sellers said it's too early to speculate how much could be saved or how many jobs could be lost by the pos-

sible closures.

"It would depend on what, if any, facilities are closed, when the closure would occur, the rent on the particular facility, staff located at the facility, other needs in the circuit, as well as many other factors that vary from facility to facility," Sellers said.

J. Leon Holmes, the chief federal judge of the Eastern District of Arkansas, argued that closing court facilities wouldn't make a significant reduction in the federal budget.

"If the federal courts close their facilities in these places, the money will quit going from one pocket of the federal government to another pocket of the federal government, but little or no savings to the taxpayers will be seen," Holmes wrote in a letter dated Feb. 23 and sent to local bar associations. "Instead, the taxpayers will be forced to travel longer distances to appear in court as parties, witnesses, or jurors."

Holmes, who is based in Little Rock, specifically spoke against closing the Batesville, Ark., court site, which ranked seventh on the possible closure list.



ACROSS THE NATION

NASA releases new moon pics requested by students

PASADENA, Calif. (AP)—A NASA spacecraft in orbit around the moon has sent back five dozen new images of the lunar surface including a view of the far side with Earth in the distance. Don't thank scientists for it. Fourth-graders from Emily Dickinson Elementary School in Bozeman, Mont., directed the spacecraft to snap pictures as part of a project headed by Sally Ride, the first American woman in space. The images were returned earlier this week. Twin NASA probes entered lunar orbit over the New Year's weekend on a mission to study the gravity field. During non-critical parts of the mission, select students get to choose camera targets. The Montana students got first dibs for winning a NASA-sponsored contest that renamed the craft Ebb and Flow.

Wis. official: Mystery booms caused by minor quake

MILWAUKEE (AP)—A minor earthquake occurred this week near the eastern Wisconsin city where researchers have been investigating a series of unexplained booming sounds, federal geologists said Thursday. The U.S. Geological Survey said the 1.5 magnitude earthquake struck Tuesday just after midnight in Clintonville, a town of about 4,600 people about 40 miles west of Green Bay. Geophysicist Paul Caruso told The Associated Press that loud booming noises have been known to accompany earthquakes. It's possible the mysterious sounds that town officials have been investigating are linked to the quake, he said.

Asia

Afghan president: Pact with US will be scrutinized

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—Afghanistan's president said Thursday that his government is "taking a magnifying glass" to proposals for the country's strategic partnership deal with the United States.

In a speech at the graduation ceremony for Afghanistan's military academy, Hamid Karzai also reiterated a pledge that any deal reached will respect Afghan sovereignty.

Talks on the pact, which will set the rules for U.S. troops who stay on after the majority of combat forces leave in

2014, have stalled on several occasions in recent months as Karzai has demanded more control over how American forces operate in the country.

Afghan and U.S. officials both say they want to sign the deal by a NATO summit in May. However, Karzai vowed Thursday that no detail will be overlooked in the push to get a deal inked.

"We are taking a magnifying glass in our hand and looking at even the tiniest items," Karzai said.

He applauded recent progress on two

issues that had threatened to derail an agreement: U.S. detainees and night raids by international forces.

The two governments signed a deal earlier this month on how to hand over control of the some 3,000 Afghan de-

tainees held by the United States. Karzai also said progress is being made toward an agreement on how night raids would be conducted. The Afghan president has called for international forces to be barred from taking part in night raids, a proposal that NATO strongly objects to, saying the raids are essential to capturing insurgent leaders.

U.S. officials have said that one compromise being discussed would involve getting a warrant from an Afghan judge to conduct the raids jointly.

The key issue for Karzai is national sovereignty—that Kabul will control how forces operate in the country.

"The security of Afghanistan will come from the sons of Afghanistan, according to the Afghan constitution," he told the assembled graduates.

The negotiations are taking place as Afghan-U.S. relations have grown increasingly strained this year. This year has seen outrage over an Internet video showing Marines urinating on supposed Taliban corpses, deadly riots and attacks over the burning of copies of the Quran at a U.S. base and then, just a little over a week ago, the killing of 17 Afghan villagers allegedly carried out by a U.S. soldier.

Villagers previously reported 16 dead, but U.S. defense officials said Thursday that the death toll was one higher. They were unable to immediately explain the change and spoke anonymously because the investigation into the shooting is continuing.

Most Afghans still say they want international forces in the country helping to keep the peace and that it is just a matter of figuring out what rules they should govern their operations.

As the political wrangling has continued, so have the attacks. On Thursday, a suicide car bomber blew himself up at a security checkpoint near a police station in southern Afghanistan, killing two children, officials said.

The attacker detonated his explosives just outside the station in Kandahar, the main city in southern Afghanistan, said provincial police chief Gen. Abdul Razaq. Two police officers and six civilians were wounded, Razaq said.

Another assailant tried to enter the police station just after the blast and was shot dead by police, Razaq said.

Militant denies making Bali bombs at trial

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—An Indonesian militant accused of building the massive Bali car bomb used in the deadly 2002 terrorist attacks on nightclubs insisted Thursday at his trial that another militant, not he, assembled the device.

Umar Patek—a leading member of the al-Qaida-linked network Jemaah Islamiyah—told the West Jakarta District Court that he did not have the expertise to build anything as big as the 1,540-pound (700-kilogram) explosive that authorities say was used in the attacks on the two clubs along with other bombs.

"I would not know how to assemble such a bomb," he said, contradicting claims made to interrogators following his arrest last year in Pakistan.

He told Indonesian interrogators after his capture and extradition that he spent nearly a week with co-conspirators in a Bali safehouse, painstakingly assembling the huge bomb using household items including a rice ladle, a grocer's scale and plastic bags.

Patek faces a maximum penalty of death by firing squad if found guilty of various terrorism-related and criminal charges, including the Bali attacks that left 202 people dead.

Most of the victims were foreign tourists to the resort island.

Patek told the court Thursday that he was present when the bombs used in

the twin attacks were made but did not actually help build them.

He testified that it was Malaysian bomb maker Azahari bin Husin, killed during a raid by anti-terrorism forces in 2005, who mixed almost all of the chemicals, he insisted Thursday.

"He's the only one who had the scientific knowledge to make a bomb like that," Patek said, noting that the slain militant had a doctorate degree in physics.

Prosecutors have argued that Patek is a skilled bomb-maker.

Another Jemaah Islamiyah militant—Ali Imron, who is serving a life sentence for his role in the Bali bombings and is now a police informer—was with the other militants in the safehouse while the bombs were being made.

Though called as a witness for the prosecution, Imron surprised courtroom observers by supporting Patek.

"I never saw him actually mixing chemicals," he said, "just picking up bags containing explosives."

Patek is the top remaining suspect in the Bali nightclub bombings about a year after the Sept. 11 attacks, which brought international attention to Jemaah Islamiyah, an al-Qaida-linked movement intent on creating a pan-Islamic state throughout Southeast Asia.

Three masterminds in the attack already have been tried and executed, and authorities have made big strides in dismantling Jemaah Islamiyah.

New Zealand yields to world on quirky road rules

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—New Zealand is finally yielding to the rest of the world when it comes to its unique set of road rules, after decades of confounding drivers from overseas.

For nearly 20 years, New Zealand has been the only place on Earth to force vehicles hugging a turn at an intersection to yield to traffic making a wider arc across the intersection. New Zealanders drive on the left, but in the U.S. it would be like making right-turning traffic yield to left-turning traffic.

That will change at 5 a.m. Sunday, when the country reverses the rules. The big question may be what took it so long.

The rules are "universally despised," said Clive Matthew-Wilson, editor of the car review website carandlemon.com.

"I've had several near accidents with foreigners who were unaware the rule even existed," he said. "The rule was a shambles from the beginning."

Just why New Zealand introduced such a quirky set of rules 35 years

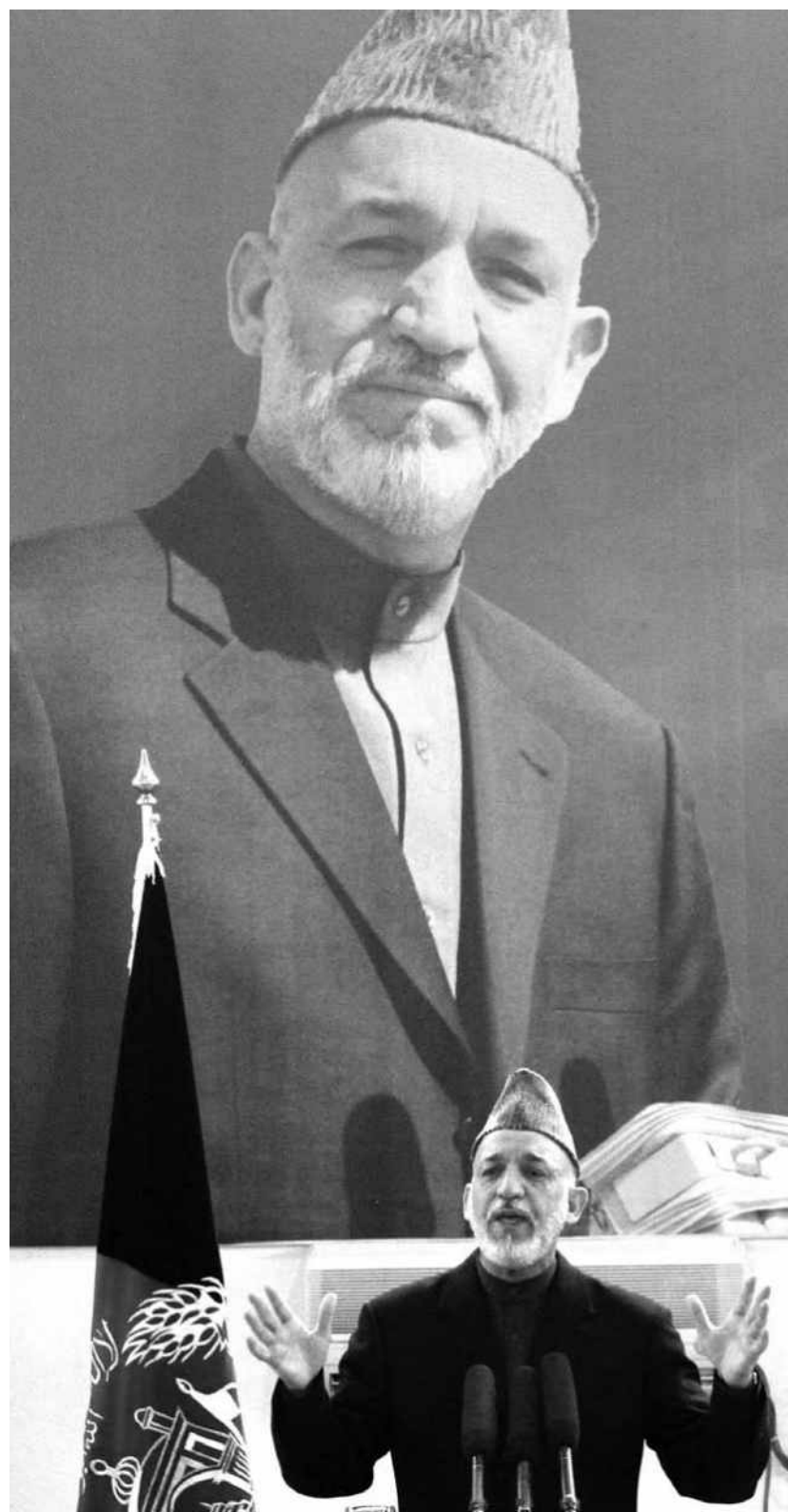
ago remains unclear. The Australian state of Victoria also toyed with a similar rule but abandoned it in 1993, leaving New Zealand a lone outlier.

Some argue that the rules encourage civility by allowing cars making the more difficult turn to go first, but defenders are few. Some 77 percent of 6,000 drivers surveyed by the Automobile Association said they thought the changes will have either a neutral or a positive effect on safety.

The New Zealand Transport Agency, which implements road rules, says Sunday's switch will speed traffic flows, reduce accidents and avoid an estimated one fatality and 97 injuries per year.

In the short term, the agency is encouraging extra civility as drivers in the country of 4.4 million adjust to the changes.

Spokesman Andy Knackstedt said the agency is encouraging motorists to give a friendly wave when things go wrong. And to be clear, he said, a one-fingered wave doesn't count as friendly.



Afghan President Hamid Karzai speaks during the graduation ceremony of Afghan military officers in Kabul, Afghanistan, Thursday, March 22, 2012.



ASIAN BRIEFS

Lincoln Hall, mountaineer left on Everest, dies

SYDNEY (AP)—Mountaineer Lincoln Hall, who was rescued a day after being given up for dead near the summit of Everest in 2006, died Wednesday of cancer in Australia. He was 56. Hall reached the peak of the world's highest mountain but became gravely ill from oxygen deprivation during the descent. His guides helped him initially then left to save their own lives. American guide Daniel Mazur, his two clients and a Sherpa guide were just two hours from the 29,035-foot peak on the morning of May 26 when they came across Hall, who had been left alone a day earlier. "I was shocked to see a guy without gloves, hat, oxygen bottles or sleeping bag at sunrise at 28,200 feet height, just sitting up there," Mazur told The Associated

Press days after the rescue.

Police say car blast kills 1, wounds 23 in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, India (AP)—A bomb exploded Thursday in a car outside the main city of Indian-controlled Kashmir, killing the driver and wounding at least 23 other people in what police said may have been an accident involving suspected rebels. Authorities believe a rebel was transporting the bomb when it went off accidentally in Bijbehara town, some 28 miles (45 kilometers) south of Srinagar, police officer Ramesh Jalla said. The driver was killed in the blast, which occurred on a busy road. Three paramilitary soldiers guarding the road were among at least 23 people wounded. Nine were taken to a special hospital in Srinagar for treatment of multiple injuries. One

victim was in critical condition.

China says will back Sri Lanka on UN resolution

BEIJING (AP)—China says it will back Sri Lanka and oppose a proposed U.N. resolution calling on the island nation to probe wartime rights abuses. Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei told a news conference Thursday that China believes the Sri Lankan government and people are capable of dealing with the issue themselves. Sri Lanka's government sees the U.S.-backed resolution as interference in the country's internal affairs. The U.N. Human Rights Council is expected to vote on the resolution this week. Sri Lankan soldiers defeated Tamil Tiger rebels to end a quarter-century civil war in 2009. Both sides have been accused of serious human rights violations.

World

French standoff ends with suspect shot in the head

TOULOUSE, France (AP)—In a dramatic end to a 32-hour standoff, a masked French SWAT team slipped into the apartment of an Islamist extremist Thursday, sparking a firefight that ended with the suspect jumping out the window and being fatally shot in the head.

Mohamed Merah, 23, was wanted in the deaths of three French paratroopers, three Jewish schoolchildren and a rabbi—all killed since March 11 in what Merah reportedly told police was an attempt to “bring France to its knees.”

Police had been trying to capture him alive since a predawn raid Wednesday to arrest him at his apartment in the southwestern city of Toulouse. The killings he was accused of—and boasted about to police—have shocked France, ignited fear in moderate Muslims about stoking discrimination and may even affect the country’s upcoming presidential election.

The seven slayings, carried out in three motorcycle shooting attacks, are believed to be the first killings inspired by Islamic radical motives in France since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. French President Nicolas Sarkozy, speaking in Paris, said an investigation was under way to see if Merah, a French citizen of Algerian descent who claimed links to al-Qaida, had any accomplices.

His mother and a brother were detained Wednesday by



A French police officer blocks the street in front of Mohamed Merah's apartment building in Toulouse, France, Thursday, March 22, 2012.

police after the mother's computer became a critical link in tracking Merah down. The brother Abdelkader had already been linked to Iraqi Islamist networks.

The SITE Intelligence Group, which monitors Internet messages, reported Thursday that a lesser-known jihadist group was claiming responsibility for the attacks in France. SITE said Jund al-Khilafah issued a statement saying “Yusuf of France” led an attack Monday, the day of Jewish school shootings. There was no independent confirmation of the claim.

Shooting suspect

Police have linked together three gun attacks, which left seven people dead and two wounded in France.



Mali coup leader says ex-president ‘is safe’

BAMAKO, Mali (AP)—Drunk soldiers looted Mali's presidential palace hours after they declared a coup on Thursday, suspending the constitution and dissolving the institutions of one of the few established democracies in this troubled corner of Africa.

The whereabouts of the country's 63-year-old president Amadou Toumani Toure, who was just one month away from stepping down after a decade in office, could not be confirmed.

The soldier heading the group of putschists gave an interview on state television late Thursday, saying that Toure is “doing well and is safe.” Capt. Amadou Haya Sanogo refused to say where the ousted leader is being kept, and did not make clear if they are holding him.

The U.N. Security Council issued a statement denouncing the coup, calling for the safety and security of the president, and for the troops to return to barracks, and for the restoration of democracy.

The scene in this normally serene capital was unsettling to those proud of Mali's history as one of the few mature democracies in the region. Soldiers smelling of alcohol ripped flat-screen TVs, computer monitors, print-

ers and photocopiers out of the presidential palace, carting them off in plain sight. Others in pickup trucks zoomed across the broad avenues, holding beer bottles in one hand and firing automatic weapons with the other.

The mutineers said they were overthrowing the government

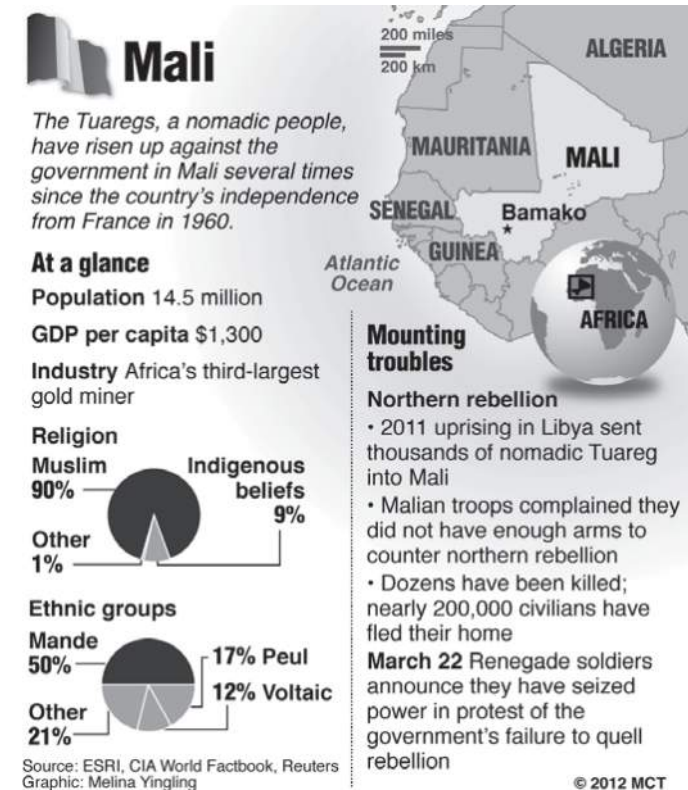
because of its mishandling of an ethnic Tuareg insurgency in the country's north that began in January. Tens of thousands of Malian civilians have been forced to flee. The soldiers sent to fight the separatists have been killed in large numbers, often after being sent to the battlefield

with inadequate arms and food supplies, prompting fierce criticism of the government.

The coup began Wednesday, after young recruits mutinied at a military camp near the capital. The rioting spread to a garrison thousands of miles (kilometers) away in the strategic northern town of Gao.

Troops had surrounded the state television station in Bamako. At dawn on Thursday, some 20 soldiers huddled behind a table, facing the camera. They introduced themselves as the National Committee for the Reestablishment of Democracy and the Restoration of the State, known by its French acronym, CNRDR.

“The CNRDR representing all the elements of the armed forces, defensive forces and security forces has decided to assume its responsibilities and end the incompetent and disavowed regime of Amadou Toumani Toure,” they said, reading from a statement. “The objective of the CNRDR does not in any way aim to confiscate power, and we solemnly swear to return power to a democratically elected president as soon as national unity and territorial integrity are established.”



One top French counterterrorism official said on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to speak to the media that the claim of responsibility could be “opportunistic,” but said authorities were looking into it. Three other Interior Ministry officials declined immediate comment.

Authorities said Merah espoused a radical form of Islam and had been to Afghanistan and the Pakistani militant stronghold of Waziristan, where he claimed to have received training from al-Qaida. He also had a long record of petty crimes in France for which he served time in prison.

A U.S. counterterrorism official says Merah was on the list of known or suspected terrorists who are prohibited from flying to the U.S. The counterterrorism official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the ongoing investigation, says Merah had been on the no-fly list since 2010. The list includes thousands of known or suspected terrorists.

Merah told negotiators he killed to avenge the deaths of Palestinian children and to protest the French army's involvement in Afghanistan.

After initially agreeing to surrender, Merah declared he would resist and that it would be either them or him.

“If it's me, who cares? I'll go to paradise,” Prosecutor Francois Molins quoted Merah as saying.

Molins said Merah burst out of his bathroom when police ginger-

ly entered his apartment Thursday morning, wildly firing his gun about 30 times before jumping out an apartment window.

“(He) launches an assault, charging police through the apartment and firing at them with a Colt .45, continuing to advance, armed and firing, as he jumps from the balcony,” Molins said.

Merah fired “until he was hit by a retaliatory shot from the RAID (elite police unit), which felled him with a bullet to the head,” Molins said, insisting that police fired in self-defense.

It was not clearly exactly when he was hit by the bullet to the head.

The prosecutor said police had gone in cautiously, using robot cameras to see if there were any boobytraps. Three members of the special squad were wounded Thursday, bringing the total of injured French officers throughout the standoff to five.

Merah, lying on the ground below his second-story apartment, was wearing a flak jacket and black djellabah robe. A Colt 45—the type of weapon used in the three attacks—was at his side along with a sack, Molins said.

Merah had made “extremely explicit films” of all three deadly attacks, video since viewed by police, and claimed to have posted them online, the prosecutor said. Merah told investigators where to find the bag with the videos, caught by a camera that had been strapped to his chest and given to someone else to keep.

Syria's Assad still in firm control after a bloody year

BEIRUT (AP)—As world leaders close ranks against Syrian leader Bashar Assad, the U.S. president summed up the popular wisdom during a recent White House press conference: “Ultimately, this dictator will fall.”

That prediction may be premature.

Regime forces have retaken the major opposition strongholds, the rebels are low on money and guns, and the U.N. has ruled out any military intervention of the type that tipped the scales against Libya's Moammar Gadhafi. Relying on the scorched-earth tactics that have kept his family in power for more than 40 years, Assad is in no immediate danger of falling.

That does not mean the bloodshed is nearing an end. Syria's rebels are turning to guerrilla tactics, such as roadside bombs and ambushes, and terrorist groups like al-Qaida appear to be entering the fray and exploiting the chaos. Assad could hang on indefinitely while an already violent conflict metastasizes into an insurgency that lays waste to the country.

“The international community and the West have been standing by and watching Syria be torn apart,” Syrian activist Fadi al-Yassin told The Associ-

ated Press on Thursday, speaking by satellite phone from the northern province of Idlib.

“In the end, we worry that there will be no state left for us to build on,” he said.

The U.N. estimates that more than 8,000 people have been killed since the uprising began a year ago in a grim cycle of attack and reprisal.

In many ways, the successful ouster of four other leaders in the wave of Arab Spring uprisings contributed to an air of inevitability to Syria's conflict—that the uprising must end, one way or another, with the leader's fall.

Some of the previous revolts were quick, like Egypt and Tunisia; others were long and bloody like Yemen and Libya.

But in every case, a despised dictator fell.

In most of those conflicts, however, there was an international willingness to get involved: President Barack Obama eventually withdrew support from his ally in Egypt, Hosni Mubarak; the U.S. became deeply involved in negotiations to extract Yemen's Ali Abdullah Saleh; and a U.N. Security Council vote led to NATO airstrikes that were key to Gadhafi's downfall.

Young Style

Titanic a magnet for kids, fine line for educators

By **LEANNE ITALIE**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK (AP)—Eleven-year-old John Payne has been a student of the Titanic since kindergarten.

He has scrupulously researched the ship, built a model out of Lego freehand and successfully lobbied his fifth-grade teacher in suburban Chicago to let him mark the disaster's centennial with a multimedia presentation for his class.

What's not to like? There's mystery, high technology and heroes. Sunken treasure, conspiracy theories and jarring tales of rich vs. poor.

But there's also death, lots of it, and that has some parents, teachers and writers of children's books balancing potentially scary details with more palatable, inspirational fare focused on survivors, animals on board or the mechanics of shipbuilding.

John "doesn't ask questions about the dead and other darker aspects" of what went on that moonless night in the North Atlantic, said his mother, Virginia Tobin Payne.

"He's a sensitive kid. We try to temper all of it so it doesn't become an obsession," she said. "After the anniversary passes, I hope we can sort of close the book on him looking for more information about it."

Barry Denenberg struggled with how to depict the horror in his new book "Titanic Sinks!" The sepia-tone hardcover, written as a mock magazine, was released ahead of the April 14 anniversary and has already made it into schools. The book, from Viking, is intended for kids 9 and older and doesn't hold back much as it blends fact and fiction for a meticulous, realistic feel that draws on the official record.

"There's only one little line in the book about how most of the people froze to death. They did not drown," Denenberg said. "Hypothermia is a much longer death. I had to make a deci-

sion about what's accurate and what's ghoulish."

Debbie Shoulders teaches eighth-grade English in Clarks-ville, Tenn., but her new "T is for Titanic" alphabet book from Sleeping Bear Press is intended for far younger children.

"The word 'died' doesn't appear often in the book," she said. "We softened it with 'perished' or 'did not live.' The goal was to remember what the people on board contributed, not so much what happened to them."

Tracey Friedlander in Bethesda, Md., has a Titanic-obsessed 9-year-old, but she doesn't shy away from the rough stuff. She thinks the story offers teachers and parents perfect real-life lessons on perseverance, loyalty, the dangers of arrogance and the shortcomings of technology as kids learn to sort out the complexities of their own lives.

"Kids like Kade have grown up in the shadows of 9/11, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and a red, yellow, green terrorist alert color code system," Friedlander said. "Like most of us, he's trying to make sense of the world around him and the accompanying human tragedies. The Titanic happens to present an incredible learning opportunity for curious minds."

Considered a marvel of shipbuilding, for instance, the luxury liner went down anyway after striking the iceberg on her maiden voyage, offering kids a solid and exciting look at the marriage between technology and human decision-making, she said.

What of human error? Was the ship traveling too fast? Why, though in line with regulations of the time - 1912 - did the Titanic set off with only 20 lifeboats for more than 2,200 people. Were poor immigrants in steerage prevented at gunpoint and by locked gates from boarding lifeboats, in favor of the wealthy?

The Titanic, Friedlander said, touches on "precarious circumstances and how someone's socio-economic class can poten-



AP
This March 9, 2012 photo shows John Marcus Payne with his Lego model of the Titanic cruise ship in Glencoe, Ill. Payne has been a student of the Titanic since kindergarten. He has scrupulously researched the ship, built a model out of Lego freehand and successfully lobbied his fifth-grade teacher in suburban Chicago to let him mark the disaster's centennial with a multimedia presentation for his class.

tially affect the way their life is valued by others and why that's inappropriate and immoral."

John Payne's mom was nervous about him seeing James Cameron's 1997 blockbuster, "Titanic," when a 3-D version hits theaters in April. He's seen the edited-for-TV version over and over again.

"The people who died, who sacrificed, I think they were really brave to die like that," he said. "I really liked the movie but the parts I found scary were the parts where Jack (Leonardo DiCaprio) and Rose (Kate Winslet) were trapped in the sinking parts."

Karen Heafer, a second-grade teacher in Lincoln, Neb., has been in the classroom for 31 years. She read a fictionalized account of a mascot cat on the Titanic to her students a couple of years ago and considers the story valuable, even half told.

"I use generalities. We don't go into a specific number of people killed," Heafer said. "A lot of them are curious about how the people survived, how long did they have to stay on the water, who found them? They're more drawn to the survivors than the ones who drowned."

Not so for Will Bousquette III, a 9-year-old at The Browning School in Manhattan. Assistant librarian Susan Levine invited Denenberg to the private Upper East Side prep school for boys after choosing his book for her third-grade reading group

for fathers and sons.

Will was especially touched by the story of Isidor and Ida Straus. The co-owner of Macy's department store and his wife

of 40 years went down with the ship together after she refused a spot in a lifeboat.

"It was heart-touching," Will said. "It made me sad, then it felt sweet. I was greatly surprised. I also didn't realize how cold the water was. I could feel the emotions but I wasn't freaked out."

Lucy Sullivan spares no detail during a Titanic unit for her seventh-grade language arts students in Brookfield, Conn. For seven years, she has assigned each real-life Titanic characters as she slowly lets the tragedy play out in class over a week or so.

She arranges their desks by type of ticket she issues them at the beginning, with first-class passengers assigned prime spots. They journal about the story throughout, learn of the mysterious missing locker key that left a lookout without binoculars and watch as she rolls a cardboard model of the ship around the classroom on a cart to demonstrate the crash itself.

At the end, her students discover whether their characters lived or died.

"When you're replaying something for 12-year-olds, the amount of information that allows you to put this puzzle together minute by minute is very powerful," Sullivan said. "Those students who never really liked fiction find this to be delicious and those who hate

fiction and love nonfiction find this to be delicious."

Why? "It's a combination of gaudy details and tragic events. It doesn't get any better than that. You own the kids if you use even a small percentage of what's available on this to teach," she said.

The effort wasn't lost on her groups this year. Sam Petriccione, 12, calls the Titanic "a day that will always live in infamy."

He added: "It shows me that being cocky and arrogant doesn't really pay off. The people in the cockpit were so positive that the ship couldn't sink that they refused to shut down the ship and stop because of the icebergs."

Jasmine Davis in Pittsburgh wasn't one of Sullivan's students, but she was definitely a Titanic-obsessed kid. She's 23 now but at 9 couldn't get enough of the subject, including Robert Ballard's 1985 discovery of the wreck strewn half a mile across the ocean floor. The oceanographer and marine biologist's video and photos ignited interest in the wreck among a new generation of kids.

In fourth grade, Davis wasn't allowed to bring school library books to recess, "but I convinced my teacher to let me take this massive novel about the Titanic outside. It was such a big book. How else was I going to finish it?"

For 20 years, Ballard's JASON Project has offered middle school teachers materials and expertise for deeper exploration of the sciences in a variety of disciplines, including his own. More than 10 million students have participated, Davis among them.

"It's hard for a kid to grasp the scope of the Titanic," she said. "I remember seeing the images of the wreck taken by Ballard when I did the JASON Project. That was really haunting."

Children's writer Mary Pope Osborne began her popular fiction series, "Magic Tree House," along with nonfiction companions, around the time the JASON Project began.

"I spent the first 10 years asking kids all over the country what they wanted me to write about. They wanted me to write about the Titanic but I kept saying, 'No, it's too sad. It's too depressing.'"

She finally took it on in 1999 with "Tonight on the Titanic," her 17th book for 6- to 10-year-olds featuring her kid characters Jack and his sister, Annie.

"It has a mythic power. It's not right next to their lives," Osborne said. "I've had very few children ask me to write about 9/11, for instance. I think 100 years from now they would."



AP
In this March 9, 2012 photo, John Marcus Payne holds his books on the Titanic cruise ship in Glencoe, Ill.

Kids from 4 states to help with White House garden

WASHINGTON (AP)—School kids from around the country will descend on Washington next week to help with spring planting at the White House kitchen garden.

Michelle Obama's office says local school children will be joined Monday by kids from elementary schools in Ames, Iowa, Chester, Pa., and Greensboro, N.C. In addition, children from a Girl Scout troop in Fairport, N.Y. will help.

The scouts from Troop 60325 wrote Mrs. Obama that they were growing 100 tomato plants to give to people without access to fresh food.

The elementary schools that snagged invitations also have been active in gardening.

This will be the fourth annual spring planting for the first lady's garden, the first vegetable patch at the White House since Eleanor Roosevelt's wartime victory garden.

Junior Whirl

by Hal Kaufman

SUM DEAL! Shuffle a deck of 52 cards. Turn up top card and cover it. Face down, with whatever number of cards is the difference between face-up card's value and 12 (court cards count 10). Turn up next card, and repeat procedure. Continue similarly until too few cards remain to comply. Now, count stacks, subtract 4, multiply by 13, and add number of leftover cards. Akaazam, result is total value of face-up cards.

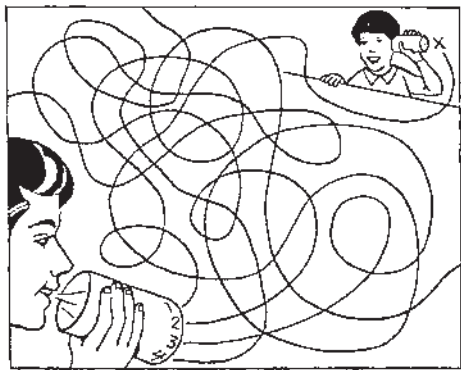
SAY WHAT! Did you ever see a bed spring? A shoe box? An onion roll? A car wash? A cereal bowl? Challenge: Think of another in 30 seconds.

GET HIGH MARKS FOR LOW?

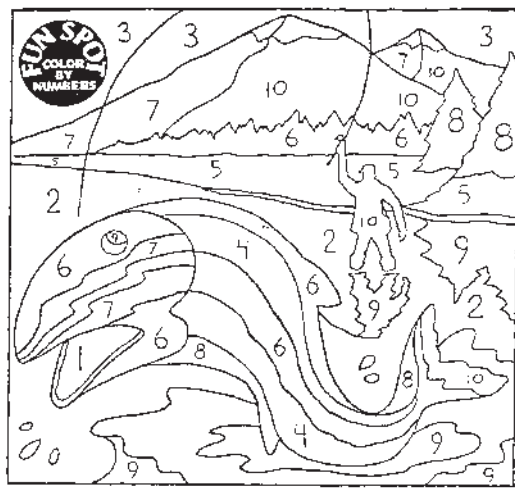
LET'S SEE if you can find five progressively longer words each ending in LOW (see diagram, above) in accord with the following definitions:

1. Opposite of high (LOW, already in place).
2. Sign often found near a school.
3. Watch out — I (Fill blank).
4. Loud roar, as of a bull.
5. Accept without question (sl.).
6. Water over the dam, for instance.

How quickly can you find all of the words? Afterwards, make up another LOW word list.



CALL WAITING! Two cans are connected with string for a home-made telephone. Which line completes the call?



SPLASH DASH! Hey, big fellow, come back here! Add colors: 1—Red, 2—Lt. blue, 3—Yellow, 4—Lt. brown, 5—Tan, 6—Lt. green, 7—Lavender, 8—Dk. green, 9—Dk. blue, 10—Purple.

SPELLBINDER

SCORE 10 points for using all the letters in the word below to form two complete words:

ESPOUSAL

THEN score 2 points each for all words of four letters or more found among the letters.

Try to score at least 50 points.

Possible two-words: Soup, sale.

MAGIC MAZE • BE CAREFUL — DON'T TRIP

B B Y V S Q N K H E B Y S W T
R O G L J G E B Y W U R T P N
K I G N D B Z D X V S Q A O M
K I G E I C A O S Y W U I B S
Q P N L J R H O K E F E R R C
A Y X S Y O T R A V L U S E U
S Q P N M C K S T A C B D D J
H F E C (S K A T E B O A R D) B
Z Y X V W I R E S O I U O A T
R Q P O M L K P I C H I I W L M
G E D C K L A W E D I S G U R

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions—forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Cats	Ladder	Shoestring	Toys
Curb	Marbles	Sidewalk	Wires
Doorstep	Rock	Skateboard	Words
Ice	Rugs	Skates	

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★★

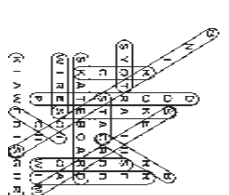
★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	÷		+		4
+		×		×	
	-		×		9
÷		-		-	
	+		÷		4
3		9		6	

1 2 3 5 6 7 8 9 9

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MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



BE CAREFUL — DON'T TRIP

GO FIGURE ANSWER

9	6	8
4	8	2
6	6	8
4	1	2

Strange BUT TRUE

by Samantha Weaver

■ It was Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw who made the following sage observation: "A government that robs Peter to pay Paul can always depend on the support of Paul."

■ We're all familiar with the act of CPR—we often see a film or television character come to the rescue and save a life using the technique. And on TV, according to a recent study, CPR is shown as being successful 75 percent of the time. The reality is not quite so rosy, though. A study conducted in 2010 found that when CPR is used in real life, only about 8 percent of the patients were still alive after one month. Of those who did survive that long, 97 percent couldn't live a normal life.

■ Do you suffer from astraphobia? If so, I hope you don't live in Florida. Those who are afraid of lightning would be terrified in the Sunshine State, especially in Tampa, known as the lightning capital of the world.

■ Researchers in the United Kingdom have invented a robot that eats slugs and is powered by the gas from the decaying creatures. They have dubbed their creation the SlugBot.

■ For six generations, many members of the Fugate family of the Appalachian region of Kentucky have suffered from a rare blood disorder called methemoglobinemia. The disorder seems to have no adverse health effects, but it's not at all difficult to diagnose it at a glance: Sufferers have blue skin. Not just a slight tinge, either; various family members have been described as "blue as Lake Louise," "the bluest woman I ever saw" and "almost purple."

Thought for the Day: "A stockbroker urged me to buy a stock that would triple its value every year. I told him, 'At my age, I don't even buy green bananas.'"—Claude Pepper

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The spay/neuter debate continues

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I'm writing in response to "Tom C.," who doesn't want to neuter his purebred German Shepherd. Good for you for sticking to your and many people's beliefs! I have met many breeders of purebred animals. They refuse to alter their "pet"—or for many, their bankroll—for any reason. For those of you who truly love your pet and your breed and try to find "perfect" homes for them (at the right price), you should know that many of them end up in shelters just like the mongrels (as Tom put it). I prefer the term "mix breed."

All Tom has to do if he truly cares is to look at any dog rescue site on the Internet and he will see many purebreds that are without a home. There are thousands of purebreds being put to sleep because there are no homes for them. The other thing about having animals altered is that they are not only calmer, they are healthier. And it has been proven that an altered pet lives longer if cared for properly.

By the way, I own two mix breeds and one purebred. All are rescues! The purebred was half her weight when we got her and has the saddest story out of all our critter kids.



I don't even tell her story, it's that terrible! So please, spay or neuter your beloved pet (dogs or cats), no matter what breed it is.—Dee O., Palmyra, N.Y.

DEAR DEE: Thanks for your support! I do stand behind the belief that spaying or neutering your dog or cat—whether purebred or not—is important and beneficial.

Send your questions or tips to ask@pawscorner.com, or write to Paw's Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. For more pet care-related advice and information, visit www.pawscorner.com.

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Stray gloves morph into puppet players

Any mismatched, mateless stretch gloves or mittens stuffed in your kids' backpacks or in baskets by the back-door hooks? Don't toss out that blue right-hand mitten or the purple-and-white striped left glove. Bring these odd combinations together for creative storytelling by the handful when you effortlessly turn them into puppets using your kids' favorite plush toy characters. You can make stray-glove puppets with broken or outgrown earmuffs, too.

It's as easy as 1-2-3:

1. Have one child slip on a glove or mitten while you cut a 2-inch piece of self-sticking fabric fastener, such as Velcro. Press it on the top of the glove near your child's knuckles.

2. Put a corresponding piece of fastener on the underside of a small, lightweight plush toy. Let your child choose a favorite character. Creepy-crawler spiders and worms, or sea creatures such as a crab or fish are especially fun. Press it firmly to adhere well. (For extra durability, sew the Velcro to the toy and glove by hand with a few stitches.)

To use the puppet, attach the toy to the glove or mitten where the Velcro pieces meet. Put it on your hand, and put the characters into action. For example: Wiggle fingers to mimic spider legs, fins on a fish or the wings of a bird. If you have a duck perched on a blue mitten, move your hand slowly to create the illusion of it swimming over ripples on a pond.



Donna's Day Creative family fun

by Donna Erickson

3. You also can take the "muff" off of broken or outgrown earmuffs, and glue or put Velcro on the bottom of the muff and on top of a glove. Sew bells on the muff for eyes or simply glue on googly eyes from a craft store. Sew or glue on feet cut out from felt at the end of each glove finger-tip.

When they're all made, with the flick of a wrist, your kids will have fun acting out a scene from their imaginations or favorite stories.

Tip: At bedtime, reverse the roles and instead of reading a book to your kids, let them create an instant, improvised drama with their cast of stray-glove puppet players.

Donna Erickson's award-winning series "Donna's Day" is airing on public television nationwide. To find more of her creative family recipes and activities, visit www.donnasday.com and link to the NEW Donna's Day Facebook fan page. Her latest book is "Donna Erickson's Fabulous Funstuff for Families."

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Good Housekeeping

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

Red Wine Steaks with Green Beans

Low in carbs and accompanied by healthful veggies, this low added-fat steak dinner is sauced with a rich red wine reduction.

- 1 1/2 pounds beef strip steaks (each 1 inch thick)
- Salt
- Pepper
- 1 tablespoon margarine or butter
- 1 bag (12-ounce) microwave-in-the-bag green beans
- 1 teaspoon red wine vinegar
- 2 shallots, finely chopped
- 1 cup dry red wine
- 1/4 cup packed fresh tarragon leaves, finely chopped

1 Sprinkle steaks on both sides with 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper. In 12-inch skillet, melt 1/2 tablespoon margarine on medium-high. Add steaks and cook 7 minutes for medium-rare or until desired doneness, turning steaks over once.

2 Meanwhile, cook green beans in microwave as label directs. Transfer beans to large bowl and toss with vinegar, 1/8 teaspoon salt, 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper and 1 tablespoon shallots.

3 Transfer steaks to plate. Reduce heat to medium-low and add remaining shallots to skillet. Cook 5 minutes or until tender, stirring occasionally.

4 Add wine, increase heat to medium-high, and simmer 2 minutes, stirring and scraping up browned bits from pan. Remove from heat and stir in tarragon, accumulated steak juices and remaining margarine until margarine melts.

5 To serve, slice steak across grain. Divide steak and green beans among serving plates. Spoon sauce over steak. Serves 4.

For thousands of triple-tested recipes, visit our website at www.goodhousekeeping.com/recipefinder/.



Rodman Flender and son Haskell showcase their guitar skills on the patio of their dramatically remodeled Carpinteria, California, beach house.

When Amy Lippman first called her architect about renovating a Carpinteria, Calif., beach house she had just bought, she tried to find humor in the design challenge ahead by asking: “Do you want to work on a Taco Bell?”

The house wasn’t really a fast-food drivethru, of course, but a 1977 stucco box with unfortunate architectural flourishes. Lippman’s husband, Rodman Flender, thought she was nuts. After viewing the property for the first time, Los Angeles architect Rachel Allen had to agree with her client’s initial assessment.

“It was one of the ugliest houses I’ve ever seen,” Allen says, recalling kitschy porthole windows and a “hideous” stucco job. But she also saw beyond the facade.

“As an architect, I have a soft spot for helping out troubled properties,” Allen says. “The house was so bad, we actually got turned on by the challenge in making it sing.”

The dark, somber “hobbit house with low ceilings” was worth the effort principally because of its location. For Lippman, a writer and producer for TV and film, and Flender, a filmmaker, the beach house was to be a family retreat — 200 steps from a pristine stretch of Carpinteria State Beach and a 71-minute drive from their home on the Westside of L.A.

The couple chose to remodel the nearly 3,000-square-foot home in two phases over four years. They began by tearing out a strange mishmash of fences, installing a new perimeter and moving the garage to open up the yard.

During the second phase, the house was gutted. On the first floor, the low ceiling was raised

to make dark interiors open and airy. A stairway by the entry was moved to the rear of the house, so sunlight and ocean breezes could flow in through the front. Upstairs, where the stairwell used to be, Allen added a casual library for weekend guests.

Because access to and from the beach was important, custom built aluminum doors that combine glass and screens were added to enhance the home’s breezy, indoor-outdoor feel.

Lippman says the home’s

dirt and sand and feels great on bare feet. “It essentially is the sand,” Flender says.

Upstairs, an oversized clock and an anatomical sketch in the kitchen add to the sense of fun that permeates the getaway. In the living area, colorful thrift store paintings are arranged against museum-white walls. Other playful touches: a dining room table covered in canvas and finished in nail heads, and outside, a retractable awning that can provide shade for two

bunk comes with an electrical outlet and a reading light.

“I liked the idea that you can close the curtains and read,” says Allen who designed the bunks to accommodate friends of Haskell, 14. Both sets of bunk beds have trundles underneath, so the room actually can sleep six.

The adjacent communal bathroom was designed with the YMCA in mind: double sinks, twin stall showers, plus direct access from the beach. Allen created a pretty pale blue cast

ing “oy” and “your tonsils” add humor and a bold graphic touch to the sunny entryway. In the guest room, a pair of red Eames chairs and a vintage map of the U.S. add more bursts of color.

“Amy has an incredible eye. She is like the Terminator: She can go to a junkyard and zero in on a unique artwork, a door-knob,” Flender says, adding later, “She’s got the eye to find that one thing.”

The home’s sense of humor continues outdoors, where a concrete diving board is a metaphorical jumping-off point into a grassy amphitheater, a place for outdoor movie screenings. And the family refers to the angel’s trumpet vine growing on the front of the house as its moustache.

With the help of landscape architect Derrik Eichelberger of Arcadia Studio in Santa Barbara, the family now can spend much of its time on a back deck with a custom couch covered in bright green Sunbrella fabric. Here, up to 12 people can put up their feet on the concrete fire pit that does double duty as a casual dining table.

The house may be loaded with features and decorated with objects and art, but it was left intentionally spare to a certain extent.

“It has the convenience of a full home without being stacked with possessions,” Lippman says. “That’s kind of a relief.”

Though the couple talk of living in their second home full time, Lippman is honest about what makes the house work, beyond its design. “It’s special because we don’t live here full time,” she says. “There is such an appeal in going somewhere close. Once Highway 101 hits the water, I feel the weight lift off my shoulders.”



Rodman Flender plays guitar in the dining room of his dramatically remodeled Carpinteria, California, beach house.

design sensibility was clear: “I wanted things to be weird and funny. Not somber or grownup.”

Client and architect incorporated traditional elements in unexpected ways. The home’s unconventional choices are immediately apparent as soon as one enters the house: The entire first floor is covered in pebble flooring, tiny sand-colored rocks sealed with resin. The family loves it because it hides

dining room tables pushed together—another communal gathering place.

The couple even considered a periscope. “I like the idea of it,” Lippman says thoughtfully, clearly not letting go of the concept.

In son Haskell’s room, custom built double bunk beds are a playful nod to Amtrak’s Pacific Surfliner, which passes by across the street. Like sleeper compartments on trains, each

by pairing white tile from Ann Sacks with light blue grout.

The rest of the house is furnished with simple slipcovered and upholstered furnishings and inexpensive IKEA accessories, accented by flea market finds that Lippman has collected over the years. In Haskell’s room, Japanese chairs bought off Craigslist are scattered around an Eames elliptical coffee table. Flash cards from the 1950s spell-

Life & Style

Whitney Houston died from drowning, coroner says

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Whitney Houston was a chronic cocaine user who had the drug in her system when she drowned in a hotel bathtub, coroner's officials said Thursday after releasing autopsy findings that also noted heart disease contributed to her death.

The disclosure ended weeks of speculation about what killed the Grammy-winning singer on Feb. 11 on the eve of the Grammy Awards.

Houston was found submerged in the bathtub of her room at the Beverly Hilton Hotel, and her death was ruled accidental. Several bottles of prescription medications were found in her hotel room, but coroner's officials said there

weren't excessive quantities.

"We are saddened to learn of the toxicology results, although we are glad to now have closure," Patricia Houston, the singer's sister-in-law and manager, wrote in a statement to The Associated Press.

Beverly Hills police said in a statement there was no evidence of wrongdoing in connection with Houston's death.

Coroner's Chief of Operations Craig Harvey said cocaine and its byproducts were found in Houston's system, and the drug was listed as a contributing factor in her death. He said the results indicated Houston was a chronic cocaine user.

Toxicology results also showed Houston had marijuana,

Xanax, the muscle relaxant Flexeril, and the allergy medication Benadryl in her system. Houston died just hours before she was scheduled to appear at producer Clive Davis' pre-Grammy Awards bash.

The singer also had buildup of plaque in her arteries that can restrict blood flow. Assistant Chief Coroner Ed Winter said the condition is common in drug users, although he said it wasn't clear whether Houston had a heart attack on the day she died.

"It just beats up their heart and they will go to use and they will have a heart attack," he said.

The exact amount of cocaine in Houston's system was not disclosed Thursday but will be contained in a full autopsy report to be released in about two weeks, officials said.

Cocaine use has been known to cause damage to the heart and could have caused Houston's death, said Dr. Michael Fishbein, professor of pathology at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. He had no role in the investigation.

He said a likely scenario was that Houston's cocaine use interfered with the normal function of her heart.

"There's no reason to drown in a bathtub unless you're incapacitated," Fishbein said.

Family and friends said after Houston's death that they didn't believe she was still abusing drugs.



Houston

"I don't think drugs was an issue for her before her death. I don't know what happened that day," Patricia Houston said in a recent interview with Oprah Winfrey.

Houston, 48, was buried in a New Jersey cemetery next to her father after an emotional four-hour funeral service that was attended by friends, family and superstars such as Oprah Winfrey, Tyler Perry, Alicia Keys, Mariah Carey, Mary J. Blige, Jennifer Hudson and Roberta Flack.

Houston, a sensation from her first, eponymous album in 1985, was one of the world's best-selling artists from the mid-1980s to the late 1990s, turning out such hits as "I Wanna Dance With Somebody," "How Will I Know," "The Greatest Love of All" and "I Will Always Love You." But as she struggled with drugs, her majestic voice became raspy, and she couldn't hit the high notes.

Interest in her music skyrocketed after her death, pushing her songs back on to charts and into heavy rotation on the radio.

She influenced a generation of younger singers, from Christina Aguilera to Mariah Carey, but Houston's drug use derailed her career and took a heavy toll on her once pristine voice.

But by the end of her career, she was a stunning cautionary tale of the toll of drug use. Her album sales plummeted and the hits stopped coming. Her once serene image was shattered by a wild demeanor and bizarre public appearances. She confessed to abusing cocaine, marijuana and pills and was eventually unable to hit the high notes as she had during her prime.

"The biggest devil is me. I'm either my best friend or my worst enemy," Houston told ABC's Diane Sawyer in an infamous 2002 television interview with then-husband Bobby Brown by her side.

Stella McCartney shows off her UK Olympic designs



British athletes, from left, paralympic swimmer Eleanor Simmonds, triple jumper Phillips Idowu, gymnast Louis Smith and heptathlete Jessica Ennis pose for photographers with designer Stella McCartney, center, in front of a depiction of the British Union Jack during the launch of the team kit that will be worn by British athletes at the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games at the Tower of London in London, Thursday, March 22, 2012.

LONDON (AP)—How many ways can you stretch Britain's red, white and blue Union Jack over finely toned Olympic athletes?

Ask Stella McCartney.

The famed designer unveiled her ideas for Britain's Olympians on Thursday with uniforms that made imaginative use of the familiar flag. The designs, a closely guarded secret for months, were shown at the Tower of London in a gala event that combined fashion's razzle-dazzle with the star quality of top Olympic competitors.

Out with rail-thin fashion models, in with real Olympic stars.

McCartney, who is serving as adidas' creative director for the Summer Games, said she hoped both competitors and the British public like the uniforms and are proud of the athletes who will wear them at the Olympics and the Paralympics.

"The basic message is to uni-

fy the team," McCartney told The Associated Press backstage after the show. "The athletes all want to feel like one team. The other big starting point for me was the Union flag, an iconic flag, I think every Briton is so proud of it, but I wanted to look at it in a different way."

McCartney said instead of simply using the flag in its traditional form she broke it up and used various elements in an original way.

"I wanted to make it slightly more delicate and feminine, while still keeping the masculinity in some ways," she said.

Britain isn't the only team that has pressed a top designer into duty—Ralph Lauren is working on some outfits for the U.S. team, and Giorgio Armani is lending his skills to the Italian Olympians.

One challenge for McCartney was to incorporate the latest technological improvements

and fabric developments into the designs without sacrificing her aesthetic goals.

"My first question for the athletes was, 'What can I do for you?'" she said. "This isn't about me, it's about Team Great Britain. They all said 'we need the technology.'"

That mean some of the artistic imagery had to be toned down.

"There are seams you can't mess up, there's tons of things, home and away kits, in gymnastics you have to have symmetry or you're marked down," McCartney said. "But it's been an incredible journey."

Triple jumper Phillips Idowu said it felt great to don the new uniform.

"All eyes will be watching London 2012 so every little detail matters," he said. "I love what Stella has done with the design."

He said the handsome designs and modern technology will provide a competitive boost.

Gay-themed movie overcomes Balkan divide

BELGRADE, Serbia (AP)—Gays and soldiers usually don't mix in the conservative Balkans. Neither do former foes from the region's ethnic wars. Yet a tale about a Serbian war-time fighter who recruits enemy veterans to protect a gay pride event has become an unlikely movie sensation.

"The Parade," a black comedy made by a Serbian director, has been the biggest box office hit in the former Yugoslavia in years, even as it challenges both the region's ethnic divide and its deeply rooted homophobia.

The movie has drawn more than half a million people since its release in October. It has been equally acclaimed in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia—something no local film has managed since the 1990s wars between

the ex-Yugoslav republics.

"The whole region is united for the first time in liking this film," director Srdjan Dragojevic said in an interview.

"The Parade"—which won an award at the prestigious Berlin film festival this year—is set in the Serbian capital of Belgrade, where a gay couple tries to organize a gay pride event in the face of threats and violence from far-right groups.

To make it possible, they enlist a Serbian war veteran to protect the parade; he brings in a group of ragtag former fighters from other Yugoslav republics—a Croatian, a Bosnian Muslim and a Kosovo Albanian.

Using an uproarious plot spiced with dry humor, Dragojevic tackles Balkan prejudices

and the highly sensitive topics of gay rights and postwar relations.

Film critic Milan Vlacic says Dragojevic's success lies in the fact that he managed to send a universal message of tolerance, without turning the film into a propaganda tool.

"Black humor played a key role," Vlacic said.

While Serbia's gay activists have been divided about the role the movie plays in promoting gay rights, Dragojevic insists that "it is very important for people to recognize the simple message that it is irrelevant what nationality you are, how you pray or who you go to bed with."

Wounds stemming from the Balkans war remain a source of division years after the fighting ended.

Prince Charles makes 1st official visit to Sweden

STOCKHOLM (AP)—Britain's Prince Charles made his first official visit to Sweden on Thursday, nearly 40 years after Carl XVI Gustaf became the country's king.

The king's wife, Queen Silvia, said she was glad to finally play host to Charles and his wife Camilla, the Duchess of Cornwall.

"It's very nice since Prince Charles during my time, unfortunately, hasn't had the possibility to visit earlier," the Swedish tabloid Aftonbladet quoted the queen as saying ahead of his arrival. "But we have a very close contact with the British royal family and so we're very happy about their visit."

In London, a spokeswoman for Charles said the royal families of Britain and Sweden have long had close ties and the prince has privately visited Sweden in

the past, but that his official visits to other nations are made at the request of Britain's government. She spoke on customary condition of anonymity.

On Thursday, Sweden's Prince Carl Philip received Charles and Camilla at Arlanda airport in Stockholm, where they landed after a three-day visit to Norway.

At a nearby hangar, Swedish air force officials showed Charles and his wife the Nordic country's Gripen jets, which took part in NATO's air strikes in Libya last year.

Later, they were welcomed by Queen Silvia to the Royal Palace and met with Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt, who accompanied them on a visit to Fryshuset, one of Europe's largest youth centers, located on the southern outskirts

of the Swedish capital.

On Friday, Charles and Camilla are to dine with Silvia and King Carl XVI Gustaf, who has been on the throne in Sweden for 39 years. Silvia has been the country's queen for 36 years.

The Prince of Wales, who has an avid interest in architecture, also will visit Sweden's St. Erik's housing site, an award-winning housing development area, with the king. Charles also will participate in a round-table discussion on renewable energy with industrial leaders.

Sweden is the second leg of a Scandinavian tour by the prince and Camilla.

In Norway, their visit was hosted by King Harald and Queen Sonja, and included meetings with Crown Prince Haakon and Crown Princess Mette-Marit.

Another 'Idol' finalist trimmed from contest

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Erika Van Pelt didn't cut it on "American Idol."

The 26-year-old disc jockey from South Kingstown, R.I., who dramatically chopped off her hair before Wednesday's evening of Billy Joel tunes, was eliminated from the Fox singing contest. Van Pelt didn't persuade the show's judges to rescue her from dismissal Thursday with a last-chance rendition of Whitney Houston's "I Believe In You and Me."

"Ultimately, Ryan, no, sorry," judge Randy Jackson told "Idol" host Ryan Seacrest when asked if she would be saved.

Van Pelt, who pleased the panel Wednesday with her shorter, darker hairstyle and sultry interpretation of "New York State of Mind," was revealed to be among the bottom three vote-getters alongside 17-year-old vocal acrobat Deandre Brackensick of San Jose, Calif., and goofy 22-year-old nonprofit organizer Heejun Han of New York.

"Idol" mentor Jimmy Iovine lashed out at 21-year-old pawn shop worker Phillip Phillips of Leesburg, Ga., for not following the advice of the show's advisers



In this image released by Fox, the remaining nine contestants, clockwise from top left, Colton Dixon, Elise Testone, Phillip Phillips, Heejun Han, DeAndre Brackensick, Josh Ledet, Hollie Cavanaugh, Skylar Laine and Jessica Sanchez are shown in Los Angeles on Thursday, March 22, 2012.

for his performance. Iovine also admonished Han for his over-the-top take on "My Life."

"I'm not trying to be a star," Han said in response to the criticism. "I'm just trying to be who I am."

The nine remaining finalists will return to the stage to perform for viewer votes next Wednesday.

Box office preview: 'Hunger Games' to take huge bite

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Lionsgate's much-anticipated adaptation of the bestselling "Hunger Games" book series is about to unleash itself on a ravenous movie-going public.

With massive advance ticket sales, the PG-13 film about a dystopian future where teenagers fight to the death on live TV is poised for one of the biggest opening weekends of all time, with a potential domestic gross in the \$130 million to \$140 million range or more.

Sony's action-comedy "21 Jump Street" had a much-stronger-than-expected debut last weekend and should have a solid second go at it with around \$20 million, despite that hungry 500-pound gorilla at the top of the box office.

Starring Jonah Hill and Channing Tatum, the R-rated film has been performing well midweek and should finish out the weekend with around \$70 million in total revenue.

Universal's "Dr. Seuss' The Lorax" has been a winner ever since its debut in early March. The film had an impressive \$70.2 million opening weekend and has continued to be the No. 1 family-film choice, having earned over \$160 million to date in North America. In this, its fourth weekend of release, an expected low-teen gross will push it near the \$175 million mark.

Disney's big budget sci-fi adventure "John Carter" will enter the weekend with North American revenues of almost \$60 million and should grab another \$5 million in this, its third weekend of release.

Romney to look for laughs, and votes, on Leno show

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Mitt Romney has been a target of Jay Leno jokes, and now he'll get the chance to give the late-night comedian a few jabs in return.

NBC announced Thursday that the Republican presidential candi-

date will be the lead guest on the "Tonight Show" on Tuesday. It's the former Massachusetts governor's first visit to Leno's stage during the 2012 presidential season.

Over the years, Leno has rified about the candidate's wealth—

Romney is a multimillionaire—and poked him on his restrained—some say stiff—demeanor.

Romney has been a Leno guest three times in the past, but this will be his first appearance since 2010.

It's a boy for Hilary Duff and Mike Comrie



In this May 11, 2011 file photo, actress Hilary Duff, right, and her husband Mike Comrie arrive at an Evening of "Southern Style" presented by The St. Bernard Project and the Spears Family in Beverly Hills, Calif.

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Hilary Duff is a new mom.

The 24-year-old actress announced the birth of her son on her website and Twitter feed Thursday.

Duff writes that she and husband Mike Comrie welcomed son Luca Cruz Comrie on Tuesday night. He weighed in at 7 pounds, 6 ounces and is the first child for the couple, who married in 2010.

Duff says she and Comrie "feel like the luckiest parents in the world."

Duff gained fame as the star of Disney's "Lizzie McGuire" and more recently had a recurring role on "Gossip Girl."

Comrie retired as a professional hockey player earlier this year. The 31-year-old most recently played with the Pittsburgh Penguins.

NBC renews musical drama 'Smash' for 2nd season

NEW YORK (AP)—NBC has smashing news for fans of "Smash." The network said Thursday its musical drama series has been picked up for a second season. "Smash" is a much-heralded blend of backstage procedural and song-and-dance numbers. It debuted last month. It is not a ratings smash but has won critical praise and a healthy-size audience averaging 7.7 million viewers. Series stars include Debra Messing, Anjelica

Huston and Katharine McPhee as players in the unrelenting world of Broadway theater.

Man to plead guilty for celeb hacking

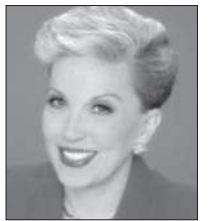
LOS ANGELES (AP)—A Florida man has agreed to plead guilty to charges he hacked into the email accounts of celebrities such as Christina Aguilera, Mila Kunis and Scarlett Johansson, whose nude photos eventually landed on the Internet. A plea agreement filed Thursday in a Los Angeles federal court says 35-year-old Christopher Chaney

has agreed to plead guilty to nine counts, including wiretapping and unauthorized access to a computer. Chaney faces up to 60 years in prison. A hearing was set for Monday. Chaney was arrested as part of a yearlong investigation of celebrity hacking that authorities dubbed "Operation Hackerazzi." Prosecutors say there were more than 50 victims, including Johansson. Nude photos she had taken of herself were posted on the Internet. A phone message left for defense attorney Christopher Chestnut was not immediately returned.

Son's inattention threatens mom's contact with grandchild

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: My handsome, 21-year-old son, "Dylan," has a beautiful girlfriend and a 14-month-old child. They have been together for three years.



Dylan works out of town. He gets back late on Friday afternoons and leaves again on Sunday afternoon. The problem is, he goes to bed soon after he gets home and then goes out on Saturday, returning at about 2 a.m.

or so Sunday morning. He spends very little time with his girlfriend and their child. Otherwise, he's good to them, provides a good home and most things they need. But he doesn't give them attention or love.

I'm afraid Dylan's girlfriend is getting fed up with this. She's a good "wife" and a wonderful mother, but if she leaves, I'm afraid I won't get to see my grandchild. Please tell me what to do. (Dylan's father isn't in the picture.)

AFRAID OF THE FUTURE IN NORTH CAROLINA

DEAR AFRAID: Was Dylan's father ever in the picture? If he wasn't, it's possible that Dylan has no concept of how to be a good father or partner. The first thing you should do (if you haven't already) is talk to your son about this.

Regardless of how he reacts, continue to be a loving, honest and supportive friend to Dylan's girlfriend. Because your son's relationship with the mother of his child probably won't last, make sure she understands that you care about her and always want to be a part of her and your grandson's lives.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I was diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder five years ago. I take my medicine and have been doing fine. The only thing missing in my life is love.

I finally met a man, and we have been slowly getting to know each other over the past three months. He talked about wanting to become a couple, and so I decided I needed to tell him about my illness. He said he wants to keep seeing me, but we need to talk more before we decide on anything long-term.

All of a sudden, I feel depressed. It's not fair that this illness "chose" me. I have never done anything that could have caused this. Do you think I'm still capable of finding long-term love? Why do I feel more depressed now than I ever have before?

ACHING IN ILLINOIS

DEAR ACHING: You are probably feeling more depressed than you ever have before because you have a lot of emotion riding on this relationship, which may be threatened because of the stigma and misunderstanding by many people on the subject of mental illness.

I do think you are capable of finding a long-term partner, and I respect you for telling him the truth. What he said was not a rejection. You have known each other for a relatively short time. He wants to get to know you better, and you should allow him the time to do that. This is how all meaningful relationships develop.

P.S. If you continue to cycle into depression, please alert your psychiatrist.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: As I was getting into a hot tub, a woman sitting in it said, "Are you prepared to pay child support?" When I asked what she meant, she replied, "Some women get pregnant from being in a hot tub with a man." Is that possible?

JON IN CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA

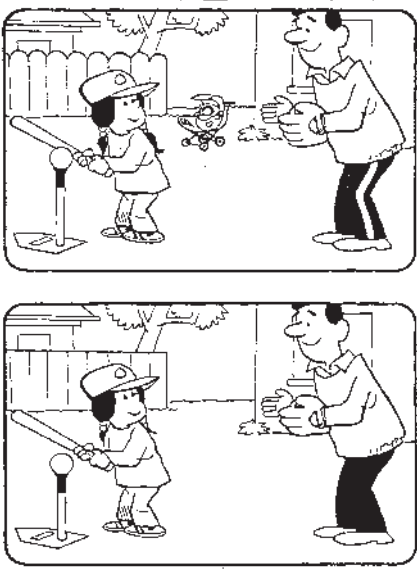
DEAR JON: It's an urban myth. What happened was the women became pregnant after meeting a man in a hot tub.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Good advice for everyone—teens to seniors—is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTIKOFF



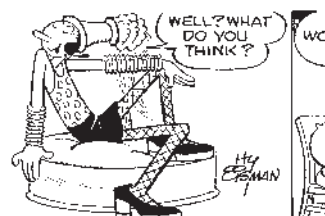
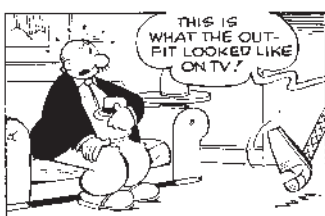
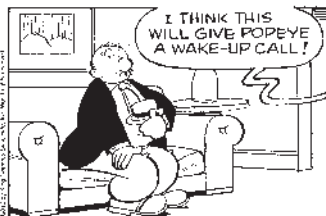
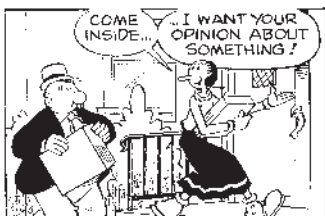
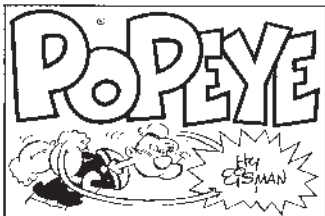
CAN YOU TRUST YOUR EYES? There are at least six differences in drawing details between top and bottom panels. How many can you find? Check off each one you find. 1. The man's hat is different. 2. The girl's hair is different. 3. The man's shirt is different. 4. The girl's dress is different. 5. The man's shoes are different. 6. The girl's shoes are different.

Wishing Well®

4	8	5	6	5	4	2	8	7	3	6	7	6
C	M	T	L	A	H	L	A	E	L	O	X	V
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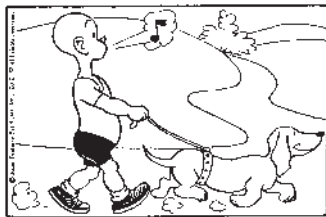
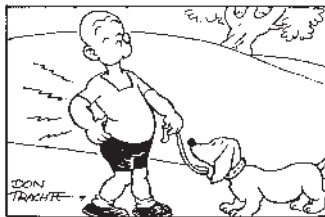
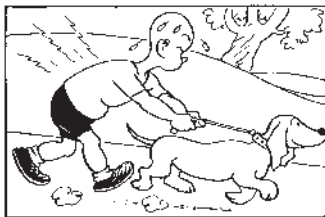
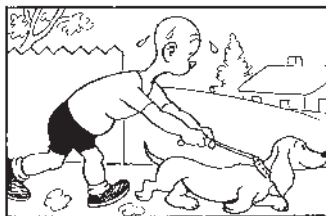
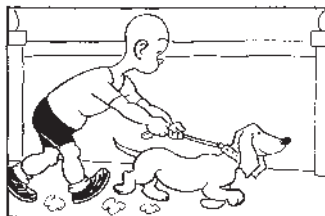
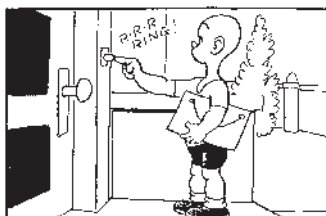
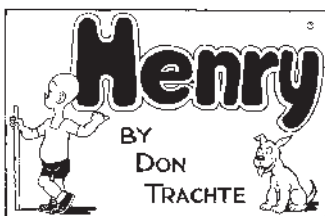
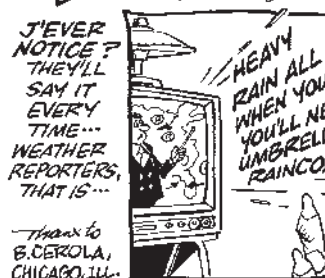
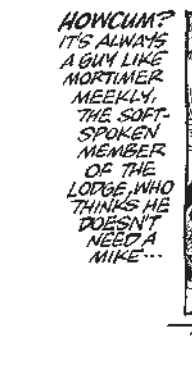
HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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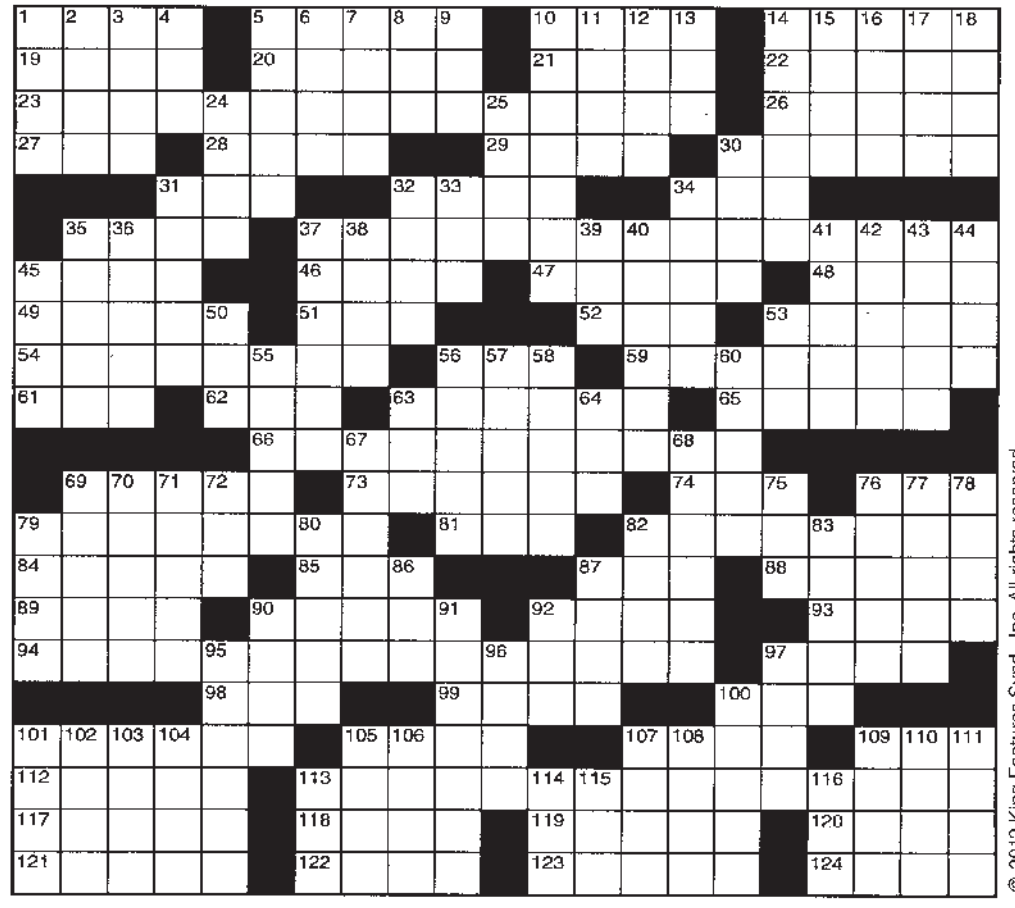
They'll Do It Every Time

THINGS WE'LL NEVER, BUT LIKE NEVER HEAR...



SELF-POSSESSED Super Crossword

- ACROSS**
- 1 Myron Floren's boss
 - 5 Malcolm — Warner
 - 10 Priam's kingdom
 - 14 Daddy duck
 - 19 Adams or Sedgwick
 - 20 Napoleon's fate
 - 21 Something to skip?
 - 22 De Valera of Ireland
 - 23 Start of a remark by Dan Post
 - 26 Rectify
 - 27 Sprinted
 - 28 Part of a suit
 - 29 Pastoral poem
 - 30 Sherbet flavor
 - 31 Norm
 - 32 Rib —
 - 34 One of "Them!"
 - 35 Dirty
 - 37 Part 2 of remark
 - 45 Colleague of Dolly and Loretta
 - 46 Mature
 - 47 Peachy-keen
 - 48 Plumb crazy
 - 49 "Maria —" ('41 song)
 - 51 College growth
 - 52 Before, to Byron
 - 53 Mendicant monk
 - 54 Utter
 - 56 See 90
 - 61 Pigment
 - 62 Hibachi residue
 - 63 Oaf
 - 65 "Love — the Ruins" ('75 film)
 - 66 Part 3 of remark
 - 69 "I Got a Name" singer
 - 73 Add info
 - 74 Mil. group
 - 76 Genesis vessel
 - 79 "Little —" ('64 hit)
 - 81 "Be my guest!"
 - 82 God with a trident
 - 84 Storms
 - 85 — Dinu Diem
 - 87 Paw part
 - 88 Jergens or Astaire
 - 89 Field of knowledge
 - 90 With 56 Across, common appetizer
 - 92 Chimney part
 - 93 Duel tool
 - 94 Part 4 of remark
 - 97 Domino or Waller
 - 98 Herriot title start
 - 99 "Excuse me"
 - 100 Western st.
 - 101 Mugabe of Zimbabwe
 - 105 Whetstone
 - 107 Out of control
 - 109 She's a sheep date
 - 112 Venerate
 - 113 End of remark
 - 117 "The Kiss" sculptor
 - 118 One of the Waughes
 - 119 "East of Eden" director
 - 120 Imminent
 - 121 Upright
 - 122 Michael of "Cabaret"
 - 123 Unkempt
 - 124 "Vissi d' —" ("Tosca" aria)
 - 4 Beer barrel
 - 5 Baseball's Derek
 - 6 Shaft
 - 7 Freshen a fuchsia
 - 8 Cover girl Carol
 - 9 Kapaa keepsake
 - 10 Auto transaction
 - 11 Actress Schneider
 - 12 Fall birthstone
 - 13 Craving
 - 14 Lack
 - 15 — Lama Ding Dong" ('61 tune)
 - 16 Prayer finale
 - 17 Hong —
 - 18 "The NeverEnding Story" author
 - 24 — Office
 - 25 Regret audibly
 - 30 In the know
 - 31 Nero's instrument
 - 32 Duplicate
 - 33 Savored the seitan
 - 34 Fall flower
 - 35 David of "Dark Shadows"
 - 36 Too tubby
 - 37 Twist and turn
 - 38 Bee flat?
 - 39 Born
 - 40 You'll get a kick out of it
 - 41 Texas landmark
 - 42 Symbol
 - 43 Buttercream, e.g.
 - 44 Laramie or Sumter
 - 45 Devour
 - 46 Dostoevsky
 - 50 — carte
 - 53 "Fee, Fi, Fo, — . . ."
 - 55 Leading man?
 - 56 Container
 - 57 Arm bones
 - 58 Annie of "Designing Women"
 - 60 Jets and Sharks
 - 63 Opening
 - 64 UK honor
 - 67 Delayed
 - 68 Worn down
 - 69 Cugat consort
 - 70 Mississippi or Missouri
 - 71 New York city
 - 72 Bk. offerings
 - 75 It's in the bag
 - 76 Skilled
 - 77 Romeo and Juliet
 - 78 Banjo locale
 - 79 Grouch
 - 80 Register
 - 82 Hogan or Hindemith
 - 83 Perfect
 - 86 Word with baby or snake
 - 87 Horner's fruit
 - 90 Sensed
 - 91 New Jersey town
 - 92 Adversary
 - 95 One who no's best?
 - 96 "What a relief!"
 - 97 Chariatan
 - 100 Uncool
 - 101 Hard to find
 - 102 Miasma
 - 103 Portend
 - 104 Rohmer or Carmen
 - 105 Sign of sanctity
 - 106 "Glad All —" ('64 hit)
 - 107 Carpenter's tool
 - 108 Knight's quaff
 - 109 Kind of pitcher
 - 110 "Huh?"
 - 111 Bronte heroine
 - 113 Horse hash
 - 114 Endorses
 - 115 Duncan's denial
 - 116 "Jurassic Park" stuff



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Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

1. LANGUAGE: What is the meaning of the Latin phrase "novus ordo seclorum," located on the Great Seal on a U.S. \$1 bill?
2. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What is the name for a seashell collector or expert?
3. ART: What Mexican muralist was married to Mexican painter Frida Kahlo?
4. COMICS: What was the name of Casper the Friendly Ghost's horse?
5. SPORTS: Where did the sport of jai alai originate?
6. GEOGRAPHY: Where is Death Valley located?
7. TELEVISION: Which PBS documentary series featured the song "Ashokan Farewell" as its theme music?
8. MEDICINE: What is the brand name for the sedative diazepam?
9. LITERATURE: Who was the first to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature (1901)?
10. ENTERTAINERS: What was the stage name of the actor who was born "Laszlo Lowenstein"?

1. A new order of the ages
2. Conchologist
3. Diego Rivera
4. Nightmare
5. Spain's Basque region
6. Southern California
7. "The Civil War" by Ken Burns
8. Valium
9. French poet Sully Prudhomme
10. Peter Lorre

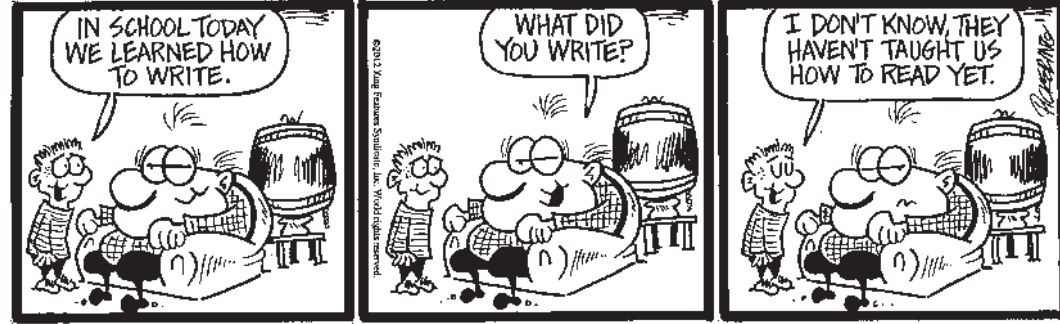
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Saturday's Answers



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



CLASSIFIED ADS



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Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED LINER ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 6-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as \$27 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	\$15	\$27
• 5-Liner	\$24	\$39
• 3-Liner with picture	\$24	\$42
• 5-Liner with picture	\$36	\$57

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
■ All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the Saipan Tribune are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.



Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.



Find today's solution in classified section

WHATZIT Solution: A fly in the ointment

Temporary Work – Guam, Palau, Saipan

Short-term positions available for face-to-face survey interviewing in Palau (Koror area), Guam, and Saipan.

Training will be provided. You must have very good written and spoken English, basic computer skills, reliable internet access, and be able to work full-time for approximately one week. Own transport, higher education, bi-lingual, and previous research experience will be highly regarded.

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Seriously looking for used cars Year 2003 & up 4 cylinder. Good condition. We pay cash! Call 287-7676

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2 Bedroom Apartment for Rent. For \$200.00/month. Koblerville, please call 288-0728.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS ISLANDS

Joe-Ann J. Hernaez } FCD-DI CIVIL
Petitioner } ACTION
 } NO. 11-0176
vs. } SUMMONS
 } FOR
Janice F. Hernaez } PUBLICATION
Respondent, }

TO THE ABOVE NAME RESPONDENT:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on file with the court, within thirty (30) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Petitioner whose address is PMB 230 10000 Saipan, MP 96950 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at P.O. Box 500307 Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this summons, judgment by default may be taken against you for relief in the complaint.

Dated this 5th day of March, 2012

/s/ Clerk of Court

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Top-seeded Syracuse beats Wisconsin, 64-63



BOSTON (AP)—Syracuse will be playing for a spot in the Final Four because of numbers.

C.J. Fair put up some like he hadn't in a while, and the Orange finished with offensive statistics that Wisconsin just doesn't allow in a 64-63 victory in the East Regional semifinals Thursday night that wasn't secure until the final buzzer.

"Offensively we played very, very well and we had to play very, very well," Syracuse coach Jim Boeheim said.

Fair finished with 15 points—five fewer than he had in the last six games combined—on 7-of-9 shooting. The Orange scored 11 more than the Badgers allowed on average in leading Division I.

Syracuse shot 55 percent from the field, well above the 38.5 percent Wisconsin gave up this season, and the Orange were 5 of 9 from 3-point range, much better than the 28.8 percent the Badgers allowed.

All those numbers mean the Orange (34-2) will play second-seeded Ohio State (30-7) in the regional final Saturday with a trip to New Orleans at stake.

"I can't tell you how good it feels to win a game like this," Boeheim said. "This was a great, great game."

And it wasn't decided until Wisconsin's Jordan Taylor missed a 3-pointer with 3 seconds left. Josh Gasser corralled the rebound but his toss toward the basket was off at the buzzer.

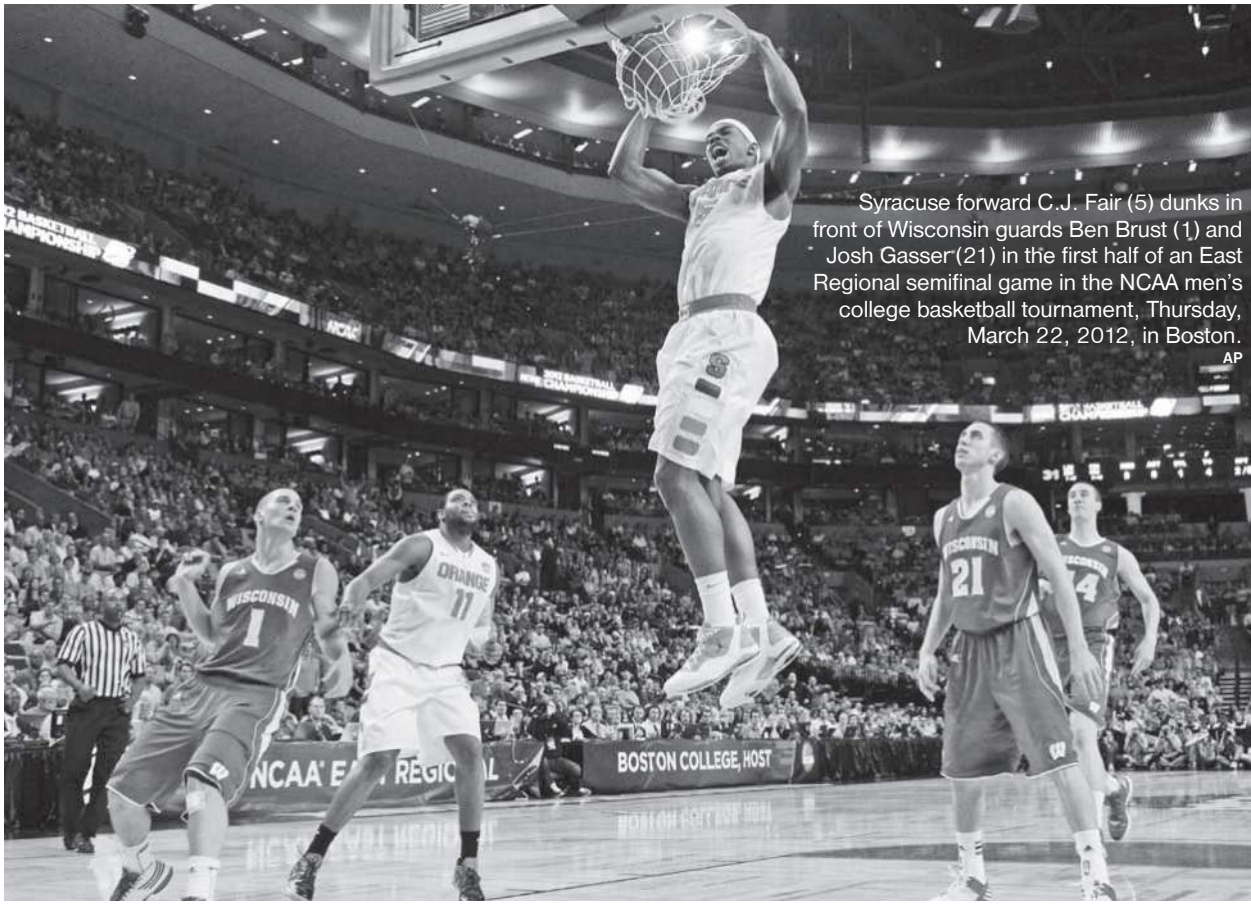
"It was on line, and I felt like I got my legs into it," Taylor said. "I knew it was a deep 3, but it felt good, and then to see it kind of come up short was kind of heartbreaking."

Kris Joseph, a 75 percent free throw shooter, had missed the front end of a 1-and-1 with 18 seconds to go with Syracuse up by a point, giving the Badgers (26-10) a chance at the victory.

Passing the ball around the perimeter of the zone but not creating much space, Wisconsin had to settle for Taylor's shot.

"We were just trying to get an open shot and try and make them rotate in the zone," Taylor said. "We did a little bit, but they did a good job of recovering to open guys there. They used the length that they have and kind of forced us into a tough shot, and it obviously didn't go down. So it was tough. Hats off to them."

The Badgers finished 14 of 27 from



Syracuse forward C.J. Fair (5) dunks in front of Wisconsin guards Ben Brust (1) and Josh Gasser (21) in the first half of an East Regional semifinal game in the NCAA men's college basketball tournament, Thursday, March 22, 2012, in Boston. AP

3-point range but couldn't make one over the final 6 minutes after a stretch in the second half when they made six straight in as many possessions.

"I think we naturally tried to move out," Boeheim said, referring to Syracuse's famed 2-3 zone. "But you've got to get them off their spots. We didn't do that for a stretch out there. But they have terrific ball movement, and they have five guys that can shoot. There aren't that many teams like that."

Scoop Jardine had 14 points for Syracuse, while Dion Waiters had 13 and Brandon Triche 11.

But it was Fair who made the difference after not being a factor late in the season.

The 6-foot-8 sophomore forward, the Orange's fifth-leading scorer at 8.3 points per game, was 7 for 27 from the field over a six-game stretch. The Orange had been struggling offensively as well, failing to reach 60 points three times in their last seven games.

"Sometimes you just need to see the ball go in the rim," Fair said.

Jared Berggren and Taylor both had 17 points for Wisconsin, which came in allowing 52.9 points per game.

Syracuse reached that many points with 9 minutes to play, but there were two lead changes and two ties still to come.

"It was a nailbiter, but we made some plays down the stretch and got a couple of stops," Fair said.

Wisconsin, which averaged 7.7 3-pointers per game and has a season high of 15, hit its last 3 with 7:03 to play when Taylor gave the Badgers their final lead of the game, 59-56.

Syracuse went ahead for good on a spin move by Waiters with 6:03 to play, but the lead was never more than three points.

Gasser made two free throws with 31 seconds left to bring Wisconsin within 64-63.

"I think that was the best game anybody has ever played against us and didn't beat us," Boeheim said.

The win was No. 890 overall for Boeheim, third on the all-time list, and it was his 48th in the NCAA tournament, breaking a tie for fifth place with John Wooden.

"Syracuse just has too many athletes that can do so many things, and it's hard to prepare for that on the defensive end. You think you're getting things done, but

you're a step behind," Badgers coach Bo Ryan said. "So we did the best we could, and I thought we played great defense. Not everybody on the court agreed with that, but I thought we played unbelievable defense for the most part."

Syracuse won again without starting center Fab Melo, who was declared ineligible for the tournament by the school just days before the Orange opened with a shaky win over 16th-seeded North Carolina-Asheville.

The Badgers were trying to reach the regional final for the first time since 2005.

Ohio State 81, Cincinnati 66

In Boston, Deshaun Thomas scored 26 points and Jared Sullinger had 23 points and 11 rebounds to lead second-seeded Ohio State to the victory.

Aaron Craft added 11 points—all in the second half—with five assists and six steals, taking charge during a 17-1 second-half run that turned a four-point deficit into a double-digit lead.

Cashmere Wright scored 18 and Sean Kilpatrick had 15 for the Bearcats (26-11), who were attempting to match Big East rival Syracuse by beating a

Big Ten opponent to advance to the East Regional finals.

It's the first trip to the regional finals for Ohio State (30-7) since it lost in the 2007 championship game to Florida.

The state of Ohio placed four teams in the round of 16, and the Buckeyes are the first to advance. Ohio plays North Carolina and Xavier plays Baylor on Friday.

WEST REGIONAL

Louisville 57, Michigan State 44

In Phoenix, Chane Behanan scored 15 points and Gorgui Dieng anchored Louisville's stifling defense with seven blocked shots, helping the Cardinals knock off top-seeded Michigan State in the regional semifinals.

Louisville (29-9) smothered the NCAA tournament's best-shooting team with its matchup zone, getting good pressure from its guards up top and some big swats by Dieng, one of the nation's top shot-blockers.

The Cardinals relied on 3-point shooting in the first half and went inside during the second to earn a trip to the West final against Florida on Saturday.

Dieng finished with five points, nine rebounds and had three steals. Peyton Siva overcame a rough shooting night—four points on 2-of-9 shooting—with nine assists.

Draymond Green had 13 points and 16 rebounds in his final game for Michigan State (29-8) and Brandon Wood added 14 points.

Florida 68, Marquette 58

In Phoenix, Bradley Beal scored 21 points to lift Florida to the victory and set up Gators coach Billy Donovan with a meeting against his old boss, Rick Pitino, in the West Regional final.

The seventh-seeded Gators (26-10) expanded a six-point halftime lead to double digits, then held off third-seeded Marquette (27-8) to take their second straight trip to the regional final. Last year, they lost to Butler. This time, they meet Louisville and Pitino.

Beal, a freshman who has NBA written all over him, shot 8 for 10 and had six rebounds and four assists.

Marquette got 15 points from Jae Crowder and 14 from fellow senior Darius Johnson-Odom, but the Golden Eagles exited the tournament in the round of 16 for the second straight year.

Hornets beat Clippers in Paul's return to NO, 97-90



NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Chris Kaman scored 20 points as the Hornets rallied for a 97-90 victory over the Los Angeles Clippers on Thursday, spoiling Chris Paul's return to New Orleans.

The Clippers were held to 11 points in the fourth quarter as they shot 4 for 23 from the field. Los Angeles also missed its last 19 3-point attempts.

After trailing throughout the first three quarters, the Hornets went ahead with an 11-2 run at the start of the fourth and led the rest of the way.

Jarrett Jack and Jason Smith each scored 17 as New Orleans snapped a five-game home losing streak.

Blake Griffin had 21 points for Los Angeles, and Paul, who forced a trade from New Orleans before the season, added 16 points on 5-for-14 shooting.

Rockets 109, Warriors 83

In Houston, Goran Dragic had 17 points and nine assists, and rookie Chandler Parsons had 20 points and a career-high 11 rebounds to lead Houston.

Luis Scola scored 18 and Samuel Dalembert added 15 points and 10 rebounds for the Rockets, who dominated the Warriors inside, outrebounding Golden State 48-31 and scoring 58 points in the paint.

Richard Jefferson scored 14 points and David Lee added 12 for the Warriors, who've lost five of their last six games.

Celtics 100, Bucks 91

In Milwaukee, Paul Pierce scored 25 points to help Boston snap Milwaukee's six-game winning streak.

Kevin Garnett had 16 points and 10 rebounds and Mickael Pietrus

scored 13 points for the Celtics, who were playing their seventh game on an eight-game road trip. With Thursday's win, the Celtics improved to 4-3 on the trip.

Brandon Jennings had 19 points for Milwaukee.

It was the Bucks home debut for Monta Ellis, who was acquired along with forward Ekpe Udoh in a trade with the Golden State Warriors last week. Ellis went first in pregame introductions and received a loud ovation.

Ellis scored 13 points on 6-for-18 shooting.

Pacers 85, Wizards 83

In Washington, David West grabbed three offensive rebounds in the final 70 seconds, Darren Collison made a key steal of an inbound pass, and Paul George's 3-pointer with 1:01 to play gave Indiana its first lead

of the game, completing a 22-point comeback.

Roy Hibbert scored 19 points, Danny Granger had 16, and West and George finished with 13 apiece for the Pacers, who recovered from an abysmal first half.

Trail Blazers 97, Grizzlies 93

In Portland, Oregon, Nicolas Batum had 24 points and new-look Portland held off Memphis.

Jamal Crawford had 17 points, including four clutch free throws in the final seconds for the Blazers, who snapped a two-game skid to even to 2-2 under interim head coach Kaleb Canales.

Marc Gasol's layup narrowed it to 91-88 with 2:15 to go. Neither side could get a shot to fall as time wound down, but Wesley Matthews made free throws for Portland before Mike

Conley's 3-pointer kept the Grizzlies close at 93-91.

Rudy Gay missed a 3 at the buzzer for Memphis.

Jazz 103, Kings 102

In Sacramento, California, Al Jefferson's putback with 0.9 seconds remaining lifted Utah past Sacramento.

The Jazz went almost 9 minutes without a basket in the fourth quarter and blew a 14-point second-half lead before Jefferson bailed them out with the game-winner to silence the crowd.

Jefferson finished with 26 points and seven rebounds, Derrick Favors added 12 points and 10 rebounds and Gordon Hayward scored 18 points for Utah, which remained one-half game behind Houston for eighth place in the Western Conference.

Tyreke Evans scored 11 of his 25 points in the fourth quarter for the Kings. Marcus Thornton added 22 points and 18 rebounds, but shot an airball on his 3-point attempt at the buzzer.

Chipper Jones says this will be his final season



ATLANTA (AP)—

Flanked by his family, his former manager and a group of teammates he hates to leave behind, Chipper Jones choked up a bit and delivered the news that's been looming for years:

It's time to call it a career.

This time, he means it.

With his 40th birthday approaching and a long string of injuries slowing him down, Jones announced Thursday he will retire after one more season as the Atlanta Braves' third baseman.

"I have fulfilled everything," Jones said during a news conference at the team's spring training stadium in Kissimmee, Fla. "There's nothing left for me to do."

Jones, who has spent his entire 18-year career with Atlanta, actually planned to retire after the 2010 season, only to change his mind. As he battled leg issues this spring, he openly wondered if he'd be able to make it through the season.

So, he'll give it one more year with the Braves, then become a full-time dad to his three children.

"I just want to make it final," Jones said.

He praised the Braves organization, calling Bobby Cox "the greatest manager any of us will ever know," thanked team executives John Schuerholz and Frank Wren for building a perennial winner and fought back tears as he turned to his teammates.

"I've been thinking about this and the reason I stayed around is you guys," Jones said. "I played on teams where clubhouse cohesion wasn't there. That never happened with you guys."

Around baseball, Jones was praised for this long, consistent career, which included the NL MVP award in 1999, an NL bat-



Atlanta Braves third baseman Chipper Jones, left, listens to former manager Bobby Cox during Jones' announcement that he will retire following the 2012 season during a news conference before a spring training baseball game against the Miami Marlins in Kissimmee, Fla., Thursday, March 22, 2012.

ting title in 2008, seven All-Star games—and, quite possibly, will include an induction ceremony at Cooperstown.

Even fans of the rival New York Mets, who were continually battered by Jones as crowds in the Big Apple tried to rattle him by chanting his actual name ("Larry! Larry! Larry!" was a familiar chant at old Shea Stadium), offered up nothing but respect.

Jones already reciprocated by naming one of his children Shea.

"He's a great ballplayer who has always been a Mets nemesis," said New York fan John Ring, speaking before Mets' spring training game in Port St. Lucie, Fla. "I mean, he just tore them apart. He's been an asset to the game, but as Mets fans we never

wanted to see him in the lineup." Mets third baseman David Wright grew up wanting to be like Jones, which didn't change after they both wound up in the big leagues.

"He's been one of those guys where I always looked across and tried to take away some of the things from his game and apply it to mine," Wright said. "He's been so consistent, so good for so long and been part of a lot of great times. It's going to be a little odd looking across there and not seeing Chipper in uniform, that's for sure."

New York Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter, whose 17-year stint with one team is surpassed only by Jones among active players, has always been impressed by

the way the Atlanta player carries himself: a wad of tobacco in his jaw, a batting glove always dangling out of his back pocket when he took the field.

"He just looks like a ballplayer, you know? His actions, his mannerisms, everything he does," Jeter said. "I really can't say enough good things about him. The way he's gone about his business, his consistency, how he took care of himself, what he means to the team. He could flat-out hit. He's a Hall of Famer, for sure."

He should be a first-ballot selection, according to Cox, who attended the news conference with the only other manager Jones will have in his big league career, current Braves skipper Fredi Gonzalez.

Schuerholz, the former general manager and now team president, and Wren are the only GMs of the Jones era. Stability meant a lot to the third baseman, who never seriously considered leaving the Braves.

"To have two top executives and only two managers at one table after all these years says a lot about this organization," Jones said. "There have been times when I could have gone into free agency to see if the grass is greener, but it never was."

While other players came and went, Jones was always the one constant in the clubhouse.

"He was the face of the franchise," said former teammate Andruw Jones, who's now with the Yankees. "You don't see it

too much any more. It's hard for players to stay with one organization."

No matter what happens in his final season, Chipper Jones will go down as one of the game's greatest switch-hitters, a guy who could hit for average (.304 in his career) and power (454 homers and 1,561 RBIs).

Shortly after reporting for what will be his final spring training, Jones marveled that he was still with the Braves with his milestone birthday coming up in April.

"Never in my mid-20s would I have given myself a snowball's chance to be in camp and have a job at 40 years old," Jones told The Associated Press. "But I like to think I've kept myself in pretty good shape over the years. The skills are still there to go out and get it done. I don't know for how much longer, but we're going to ride it as long as we can."

That ride lasts one more season.

The Braves said Jones hopes to remain with the organization in another capacity after his playing career ends, but it won't happen next year. First, he plans to spend some long-overdue time with his family.

"I just want to be a full-time dad," Jones said.

But he'll always stay involved in the game. While Jones has no desire to go into managing, he has indicated a desire to be hitting instructor some day.

"I have such a passion for hitting," Jones said last month. "I'm kind of a one-track-mind kind of guy. I can't have my hands in a bunch of jars and be delegating responsibility for a bunch of different areas. I'd much rather stay focused on just one area and be able to do that well. While I think I could manage, I really don't have the urge to manage. I'd much rather be a hitting coach than a manager."

Wi opens with 66; Woods 3 behind at Bay Hill



ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—

Charlie Wi felt a lot better walking off the golf course compared with his last round.

So did Tiger Woods.

Coming off a final round at Innisbrook in which he made a 13 on one hole, Wi hit an 8-iron over the water to 6 feet for birdie on the 18th for a 6-under 66, giving him a share of the lead with Jason Dufner in the Arnold Palmer Invitational.

It's the fourth time Dufner has been atop the leaderboard after a round during the Florida swing—except that none of those rounds have been on Sunday.

The last time Woods was seen on the PGA Tour, he was being driven away in a golf cart after withdrawing in the middle of the final round at Doral with soreness and swell-

ing in his left Achilles tendon.

Woods, a six-time champion at Bay Hill, shot a 69 without breaking a sweat, much less breaking any body parts. There was nothing particularly special about this round, except for a 30-foot birdie putt that swirled around the cup at the 15th, and a couple of three-putt bogeys that kept his score from being lower.

"I didn't really do anything great today," said Woods, who had only two approach shots inside 15 feet on the par 3s and par 4s. "I was just solid all day. I drove the ball well, hit my irons decent and putted all right. It's just one of those days where not a lot was going on."

Maybe not in his group.

Behind him, though, it was a different story.

Phil Mickelson was all over the place, going from a bunker to a magnolia tree on his way to an unlikely par; hitting a tee shot out of bounds for double

bogey; hitting into the water for another double bogey; and somehow escaping with a 73.

In the group behind Mickelson, Anthony Kim made only two pars on the back nine for a 32 that shot him up the leaderboard. Kim followed two birdies with two bogeys, made two more birdies and then hit 5-iron on the 17th hole for an ace. He was leading until a pair of bogeys on the back nine gave him a 69, a good start for a guy who has been in the tank most of the year.

"I've been running my head into a brick wall," Kim said. "So I moved away from the brick wall, and now I can swing and make some birdies out here."

Nick Watney was on the opposite side of the course, and not as many people saw his 68. He was pleased to see some putts go in, which has contributed to his slow start this year.

"I putted really well and it's

nice to do that because that's been my Achilles this year," Watney said.

Woods' Achilles also used to be his putting, until it actually became his Achilles tendon.

This is Woods' last tournament before the Masters, where he has not won since 2005. It's part of eight straight days of golf, which began Sunday with a scouting trip to Augusta National, and there has been concern that his Achilles tendon might flare up again. Woods said he has no way of knowing if it will tighten up on him as it did at Doral, though he said he has dealt with tightness before and it didn't linger.

Whatever the case, he wasn't worried about it on a sunny Thursday morning in his former town.

"I'm just out there playing," he said. "I'm feeling good. I've been getting treatment. Everything's good. No swelling. If I

can just keep it that way, everything will be great."

Justin Rose and Sean O'Hair also were at 69, while Ryder Cup captain Davis Love III and Bud Cauley were in the group at 68. Ernie Els, who might need to win to get into the Masters, played with Woods and shot 71.

Wi has been making news for all the wrong reasons this year. He had a three-shot lead going into the final round at Pebble Beach and four-putted the opening hole for double bogey, eventually finishing second.

Last week at the Transitions Championship was more comedy than tragedy. He already was toward the bottom of the leaderboard in the final round when he tried to hit a shot through a gap in the trees, and three times saw his ball hit the tree and carom out of bounds onto the practice range. He wound up with a 13 and shot 78, and didn't give it much thought except when asked about it.

"That was just a blip on the radar screen," Wi said. "Actual-

ly, I figured I should have gone for some tour record so at least I could be remembered."

He doesn't have many good memories of Bay Hill—he withdrew one year, missed the cut two other times and tied for 24th last year, with a 66 in the third round. So at least he's making progress.

Kim started the year at No. 78 in the world and wanted to play his way into the top 50 so he could qualify for the Masters. Instead, he has gone the other way in a hurry—four missed cuts, a disqualification, and a tie for 42nd at the Honda Classic. He has fallen to No. 120 in the world, surprising for a guy considered one of the rising Americans just four years ago at the Ryder Cup.

"I'm doing all the right things to get me closer to playing," Kim said. "Getting the ball in the hole is not an issue. Getting the ball off the tee the last two years has been a struggle. I know I can get the ball in the hole. I just have to get the ball in the fairway."

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	26	21	.553	—
Boston	25	21	.543	1/2
New York	23	24	.489	3
Toronto	15	32	.319	11
New Jersey	15	33	.313	11 1/2

Southeast Division

Miami	34	11	.756	—
Orlando	30	18	.625	5 1/2
Atlanta	27	20	.574	8
Washington	11	35	.239	23 1/2
Charlotte	7	37	.159	26 1/2

Central Division

Chicago	39	10	.796	—
Indiana	27	18	.600	10
Milwaukee	21	25	.457	16 1/2
Cleveland	17	27	.386	19 1/2
Detroit	16	30	.348	21 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

San Antonio	30	14	.682	—
Dallas	27	21	.563	5
Memphis	25	20	.556	5 1/2
Houston	26	22	.542	6
New Orleans	12	35	.255	19 1/2

Northwest Division

Oklahoma City	35	12	.745	—
Denver	26	21	.553	9
Utah	25	22	.532	10
Minnesota	23	25	.479	12 1/2
Portland	22	25	.468	13

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	29	18	.617	—
L.A. Clippers	26	21	.553	3
Phoenix	23	24	.489	6
Golden State	19	26	.422	9
Sacramento	17	30	.362	12

Yesterday's Games

Indiana 85, Washington 83
Houston 109, Golden State 83
New Orleans 97, L.A. Clippers 90
Boston 100, Milwaukee 91
Utah 103, Sacramento 102
Portland 97, Memphis 93

ARNOLD PALMER INVITATIONAL SCORES

ORLANDO, Florida (AP)—Scores Thursday from the Arnold Palmer Invitational, a US PGA Tour event on the 7,419-yard, par-72 Bay Hill Club and Lodge Course (a-amateur):

FIRST ROUND

Charlie Wi	34-32	-66
Jason Dufner	34-32	-66
Nick Watney	35-33	-68
Jimmy Walker	36-33	-69
Tiger Woods	35-34	-69
K.J. Choi	35-34	-69
Justin Rose	33-36	-69
Anthony Kim	37-32	-69
Sean O'Hair	34-35	-69
Bubba Watson	33-36	-69
Chris Stroud	34-36	-70
Bud Cauley	34-36	-70
Davis Love III	35-35	-70
Brian Davis	35-35	-70
Marc Leishman	37-33	-70
John Rollins	35-36	-71
Ernie Els	35-36	-71
Zach Johnson	35-36	-71
Chad Campbell	36-35	-71
Skip Kendall	36-35	-71
Kris Blankens	34-37	-71
Ryan Moore	35-36	-71
Ian Poulter	35-36	-71
Johnson Wagner	36-35	-71
Vijay Singh	36-35	-71
J.B. Holmes	36-35	-71

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pat Perez	33-39	-72
Hunter Mahan	37-35	-72
Robert Allenby	36-36	-72
Brian Gay	37-35	-72
Daniel Summerhays	37-35	-72
Jeff Maggert	36-36	-72
Jim Furyk	36-36	-72
Martin Laird	35-37	-72
Sergio Garcia	36-36	-72
Graeme McDowell	36-36	-72
Henrik Stenson	36-36	-72
Chez Reavie	35-38	-73
Greg Owen	35-38	-73
Ryo Ishikawa	38-35	-73
Robert Garrigus	36-37	-73
George McNeill	39-34	-73
Phil Mickelson	36-37	-73
Webb Simpson	35-38	-73
Camilo Villegas	37-36	-73
Trevor Immelman	36-37	-73
Kevin Chappell	37-36	-73
Andres Romero	41-32	-73
Bill Haas	38-35	-73
Brandt Snedeker	34-39	-73
Kevin Na	36-37	-73
Charles Howell III	36-37	-73
Ryan Palmer	38-35	-73
William McGirt	34-39	-73
Matt Every	37-36	-73
Seung-Yul Noh	41-32	-73
John Mallinger	38-36	-74
Scott Stallings	37-37	-74
David Toms	36-38	-74
Harrison Frazar	38-36	-74
Bobby Gates	36-38	-74
Lee Janzen	36-38	-74
Dicky Pride	39-35	-74
Josh Teater	35-39	-74
Michael Thompson	36-38	-74
David Duval	36-38	-74
Sang-Moon Bae	37-37	-74
Boo Weekley	38-36	-74
Tim Herron	38-36	-74
Martin Flores	37-37	-74
Gary Christian	35-39	-74
Greg Chalmers	37-38	-75
Brendon de Jonge	37-38	-75
Rod Pampling	36-39	-75
Brandt Jobe	36-39	-75
D.A. Points	38-37	-75
Rory Sabbatini	40-35	-75
Gary Woodland	35-40	-75
Justin Leonard	39-36	-75
Scott Piercy	37-38	-75
Billy Hurley III	38-37	-75
Robert Gomez	38-38	-76
Robert Damron	39-37	-76
Tommy Gainey	41-35	-76
Jhonattan Vegas	38-38	-76
Charley Hoffman	38-38	-76
Ted Potter, Jr.	39-37	-76
Rocco Mediate	38-38	-76
Harris English	36-40	-76
Colt Knost	37-39	-76
D.J. Trahan	38-38	-76
Jeff Overton	35-41	-76
Scott McCarron	38-38	-76
Jonathan Byrd	41-35	-76
Stewart Cink	41-35	-76
Kyle Reifers	37-39	-76
Sam Saunders	36-40	-76
John Huh	37-40	-77
Mark Wilson	38-39	-77
Mike Weir	40-37	-77
a-Kelly Kraft	38-39	-77
Ken Duke	37-40	-77
Daniel Chopra	38-39	-77
Andrew Magee	37-40	-77
Fredrik Jacobson	36-41	-77
Brian Harman	37-40	-77
Jason Kokrak	41-36	-77
Carl Pettersson	38-40	-78
Ben Crane	42-36	-78
Brendon Todd	42-36	-78
Tom Gillis	42-37	-79
Cameron Tringale	39-40	-79
Jerry Kelly	41-38	-79
J.J. Killeen	38-41	-79
Erik Compton	39-41	-80
Spencer Levin	40-41	-81
Brendan Steele	40-41	-81
Ricky Barnes	42-40	-82
David Damesworth	41-41	-82
Tim Clark	DQ	

Ali'i Kamotes, Sparks lead SEDA's Master, C divisions



Es'y Kitchen's Ali'i Kamotes and Jonny's Bar & Grill's Sparks are the current frontrunners in their respective Saipan Electronic Dart Association C and Masters divisions after the completion of Wednesday's weekly pairings.

Ali'i Kamotes bested SOS Bar & Grill's Mixblood Rookies (38-47), 11-6, at home to improve its win-loss card to 53-32. They pace Bammy's Restaurant & Bar's second place Aces (50-35) by three games.

Aces then triumphed over SOS' All Stars (47-38), 10-7, at home to remain in the passenger seat, while VFW Post 3457's D'Companeros (30-55) upset the SOS Destroyers (41-44), 9-8; and its sister team



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Ali'i Kamotes, seen here in a file photo, remain in first place in SEDA's Master Division after defeating SOS Bar & Grill's Mixblood Rookies at home in Es'y Kitchen last Wednesday.

Maharot Crew (47-38) defeated 11-6, in a home match. Bammy's Sabalu Boys (34-51), C division's Sparks snuck

in the fifth inning were gifted from walks and wild pitching upon starter Jerald Cabrera's departure.

The Sox went through its lineup for nine runs out of the gate and never looked back.

Winning pitcher Carbera gave up an earned run of three hits with two walks and three strikeouts in four innings.

He batted 3-for-3 with an RBI, three runs, and a base on ball. Roke Tenorio swung 3-for-4 with two RBIs and three runs. M.J. Sakisat went 2-for-2 with an RBI, three runs, and a base on ball. Lions' Juden Joyner batted 2-for-2 with an RBI and a base on ball.

Red Sox 16, Jets 10

After falling behind, 0-6, early, the Red Sox resurrected a 7-6 edge in the third inning off six hits. Nathan Camacho cranked a two-RBI single, Jose Tyq hit an RBI triple with a stolen dish, and Beneil Taisacan bagged a RBI single.

Red Sox pitcher Camacho recovered nicely from a stumble in the second inning and struck out the side to close the top frame.

His teammates responded soon after in the fifth inning with a six-run surge built off a fielder's choice, an error, a two-RBI triple by Jerald Cabrera, and wild pitches.

The Sox then added three more runs in the sixth before Camacho returned to the mound and pulled the plug on the Jets' last ditch rally.

Camacho may have given up eight earned runs, but still went the distance and allowed seven

hits, five walks, and a hit batsman with 14 strikeouts.

Red Sox's Cabrera batted 4-for-5 with two RBIs and three runs.

Fielders 14, Enforcers 12

The Fielders let a 10-1 lead in the second inning get away from them as the Enforcers battled back to tie the game at 12-all in the last three innings of regulation.

Fielders pitcher Jonathan Camacho gave up just two hits and left his team with a promising 10-2 cushion after four innings, but the Enforcers refused to go quietly.

They managed three runs in the fifth from early walks and a triple by Cedric Ada and then hammered out six hits in the sixth, including a two-run inside-the-park homer by Caleb Takao to knot the match at 10-all. Ethan Lizama then tripled home Fred Sangao and was grounded home by Jeffrey Dela Cruz.

Then the count shifted to 12-all as both teams stepped up and added two more runs in the seventh, but in the end the Fielders' Jerry Kintol led off with a triple and was doubled home by Kainoa Wanket; Wanket scored off an error.

Fielders reliever Jadrien Camacho recovered from his early struggles and managed to get it done on the second try.

Jonatahn Camacho busted a three-run inside-the-parker in the second inning; Kintol ripped two triples in the game; Wanket went 3-for-4 with two triples, an RBI double, three runs, and

past Naked Fish's sixth-ranked Hafa Mas! (32-43), 8-7, at home to improve to 48-28 and cling to the top spot by one game over VFW's Party Rock (46-29) with Naked Fish Bar & Grill's Island Apparel Oh MG! (45-30) also hot on the trail.

Party Rock went through 19th Hole Bar's Hole In One (18-57), 10-5, on the road while Oh MG! downed Oceanside's fourth place Shooters V1 (40-35), 9-6, at home.

Meanwhile, Bammy's DRP (36-39) defeated Oceanside's Shooters V2 (29-46), 10-5, in a road match.

Notables include a High In 136 by DRP's Clifford Hamoy and a High Out 107 by Shooters V1's Moody Zamora. (Walter Cepeda Sutherland)

a base on balls; Matt Hamilton batted 3-for-5 with an RBI triple and two runs.

Enforcers' Top 3 Henry Lizama, Cedric Camacho, and Takao all went 3-for-4.

Ol'Aces 32, Lions 0

It was a tough day at the office for the home team Lions on both sides of the plate. The Ol'Aces, on the other hand, had a field day and bashed 19 hits with 16 walks as they rotated through its line up six times.

Ol'Aces' Verlance Sechar-midal and Jessie Brel batted 4-for-5 and scored six times.

Winning pitcher Giovanni Taitingfong secured his no-hitter and gave up just two walks and a bean ball with six strikeouts in five innings

BIG LEAGUE Hustlers 11, Fielders 9

The Hustlers took a 7-4 lead in the fourth inning off a pair of triples by MacGarette Duenas and McGary Scaliem. The latter scored off an error.

They then tacked on two runs in both the fifth and sixth innings before holding off a late rally by the Fielders in the final stand.

Hustlers' Jeremy Lizama batted 4-for-4 with an RBI and three runs. Fielders' Carl Camacho swung 3-for-4 with two RBIs and two runs.

Winning pitcher Brian Camacho was credited with the win, giving up three earned runs off five hits with seven strikeouts in four innings.

X-CLUSIVE

From Page 28

Gagu's Nokki Saralu left the yard with a solo blast in the third inning, but Managaha Boys' Simon got it back later in the fifth.

Gagu Eyes then went ahead, 8-3, in the bottom frame off two hits, a fielder's choice, and a double by Swain Cangco and both teams managed two runs in the sixth inning before Gagu Eyes held it down in the final stand.

Gagu Eye's Saralu batted 3-for-3 with three runs; Managaha Boys' Joey Sablan also went 3-for-3 with a pair of two-run homers.

Natibu 19, Familia 8

Natibu's Jerry Guerrero broke the ice with a two-RBI single in

the opening frame and his teammates Bruce Norita and Josh Wilson tacked on three more runs in the second inning with a solo shot and a two-run bomb.

Familia mustered a run in to start the third, but Natibu obliged with seven more runs in the bottom frame off five hits, a pair of fielder's choices, two walks, and a sacrifice fly; Norita pounded a three-run homer in the mix.

Familia struck back with a seven-run tear in the fourth off nine hits from a solo homer by Pat Guerrero, an RBI single by Kolin Reyes, a grand slam by Jack Sablan, and a two-RBI double, but Natibu held true in the clutch with another seven runs off eight hits in the bottom frame highlighted by a grand slam by Norita.

supporter Marianas Visitor Authority and new sponsor Mar-Pac Budweiser.

For more information, contact Frank Tudela at 664-3200 or 664-3201 or email ftudela@marianas.com.

MAHI DERBY

From Page 28

a record 30.35-lb Mahi for top prize over a field of 31 boats.

This year's derby is also made possible by longtime-

JUNIOR LEAGUE Red Sox 16, Lions 3

The Red Sox out-hit the Lions, 14-3, in the match and had no trouble advancing over its opponents as Kagman's last two runs

Activity Schedule for March 24, 2012

8:00 AM to 12:00 PM: Morning practices

6:30 PM to 9:30 PM: Evening practices

2012 Tan Holdings Intercompany Basketball League

3:00 PM: Saipan Grand Hotel vs. Fiesta Resort & Spa

5:00 PM: Shirley's Coffee Shop vs. POI/RMS

7:00 PM: JP Center/TSL Plaza vs. CTSI

There are no scheduled games.



Chipper Jones
says this will be
his final season

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Saipan Tribune Sports



Top-seeded
Syracuse beats
Wisconsin, 64-63

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28 SATURDAY - SUNDAY, MARCH 24-25, 2012

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Falcons clip Lions in Senior League



Tanapag Falcons' Adolfo Roppul nabs a Kagman Lions runner at the plate in Thursday's Senior League matchup held at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
walter_sutherland@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Senior League's Natibu Sports Association Tana-pag Falcons nipped the Marianas Cable Vision-Rep. Ramon S. Basa-Frederick P. DeLeon Guerrero Kagman Lions, 11-9 in last Thursday's Saipan Little League Baseball matchup held at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.



In other results, Senior League's Juan Santiago Jets II routed the Rep. Antonio Sablan-Eliceo D. Cabrera Hunters, 13-2, on Wednesday; Saipan Shipping Company's Jets I rolled over the San Roque D-9ers, 16-6, on Tuesday after edging out the DPS Dare Program Enforcers 11-10, on Saturday; and the Docomo Pacific Ol'Aces trumped the Lions, 19-0, back on Saturday.

Junior League's Bank of Saipan Red Sox bested the DYS Kagman Lions, 16-3, on Wednesday after outlasting the SSC Jets, 16-10 on Sunday. Also on Sunday the IT&E Fielders survived the DPS Dare-Leep Enforcers, 14-12, on Sunday; and the Hawaiya Technologies, Inc. Ol'Aces dismantled the Lions, 32-0.

Finally, the Big League's Paradise Is-

land Animal Hospital Hustlers fended off the IT&E Fielders, 11-9, on Tuesday.

SENIOR LEAGUE Falcons 11, Lions 9

The Lions held an early 5-4 edge after two innings before the Falcons soared ahead, 11-5, in the bottom of the third. They loaded the bases after Frankie Lieto led off with a triple and scored off a sacrifice fly, which set up a three-RBI triple by Adolfo Roppul. He was then triple-homed by Frankie Norita who was driven to the plate by Lieto.

The Lions answered with four runs to start the fourth off a wild pitch, a two-RBI triple by Paul Celis, and a sacrifice fly, but the count would remain as such as both squads fell silent in the late innings.

Roppul batted 3-for-3 with three RBIs
See FALCONS on Page 27

X-clusive sneaks past Saipal, 7-6

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER



X-clusive pulled out a crafty 7-6 comeback victory over Saipal in the Chamolinian Softball League men's division match held last Wednesday at the Capitol Hill Ballfield.

In other results, Gagu Eyes bested Managaha Boys, 10-5, and Natibu run-ruled Familia, 19-8, in five innings.

As of Wednesday, the men's division standings show the defending champion Man Amigos tied for first place with the 2011 runner-up Natibu. The front-runners are the only unbeaten teams, left out of the 15-team field with three wins apiece.

Your Balls, Berdax, and Manelos all share identical 2-0 win-loss cards; Gagu Eyes, G-Ballers, Saipal, Familia, and X-clusive hold even 2-2 records; Team Elias sits at 1-1; Six Pack and the Warriors have 1-2 slates; Talu Fahn is at 1-3; and the Managaha Boys remain winless after four tries.

The women's standings show Check It Out in first place and still unbeaten after three games; Sakudi remains in second place at 2-2; Enamo Meta is at 1-1; 670 Babes have a 1-2 slate, and the Rookies bring up the rear at 0-2.



WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

X-clusive's John Reyes, seen here in a file photo, sacrificed home the winning run with a line drive in last week's 7-6 victory over Saipal as the CSA 2012 Budweiser Softball League season continued at the Capitol Hill Ballfield.

X-clusive 7, Saipal 6

X-clusive rallied back from a 0-4 deficit in the first two innings with a two-run home run by Fred Sato in the third, a solo shot by Vince Cepeda in the fifth, and a slew of four hits in the sixth frame capped off by a two-RBI smash by Mike Manas to put them ahead, 5-4, heading into the last inning of regulation.

Saipal mustered two runs with their back against the wall off a triple and a sacrifice fly, but X-clusive knotted it back at 6-all in the bottom frame

from another solo blast by Cepeda.

Then in the eighth, am X-clusive batter drew a lead off walk and was moved into scoring position a base hit later and scored after tagging up on a line out by John Reyes for the win.

Gagu Eyes 10, Managaha Boys 5

After a 2-2 deadlock form the first inning, Gagu Eyes trotted ahead, 4-2, in the second frame off a pair of base hits by Mike Iguel and Nokki Torres.

See X-CLUSIVE on Page 27

2012 Mahi Fishing Derby set for April 14

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

The Saipan Fishermen's Association is hosting the 8th Annual 2012 Mahi Fishing Derby on April 14 at the Garapan Smiling Cove Marina.

Pre-registration is scheduled for April 13 at Smiling Cove until 6pm.

Prizes are still being determined organizers are hoping for over 30 participants.

The Top 5 place finishers will all be awarded trophies and prizes; only Mahi fish will be counted toward the competition, regardless of the weight qualification and a boat can only win one prize per category.

Registration on the day of the derby starts at 5:30am at Smiling Cove Marina. At the start of the derby all boats must check in between 6am and 8am before heading out to sea, however late entrants will be accepted. All competitors must enter their catches to derby officials by the 6pm deadline at the Smiling Cove weigh-in station in order to qualify.

The SFA would also like to remind all participants to make sure they sign the mandatory release



WALTER CEPEDA-SUTHERLAND

San Juan III angler John San Nicolas brings his team's 25.40-lb third place Mahi to the Smiling Cove Weigh Station during the 7th Annual Mahi Fishing Derby held last year.

waiver form, no exceptions.

Last year, the *Carmelita* under captain, former Justice Alex Castro, and crewmates Alex Castro Jr., Jerry Babauta, and Rufino S. Inos pulled in

See MAHI DERBY on Page 27